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Contributions by **Horatio Bottomley, "Taffrail," Shirley Kellogg, M. McDonnell Bodkin, etc.**

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BEECHAM'S PILLS.

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It seems a far cry from the stage to the farmyard, but on page 87 Miss Shirley Kellogg, the popular actress, describes from personal experience what an admirable combination they make, and proves, in a series of charming photographs, that one can work on the land and still be beautiful!

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Photo *Malcolm Arbuthnot.*

Miss Shirley Kellogg spends much of her leisure time working on her own farm, but her day-time intercourse with cows and chickens does not in any way detract from her charm when singing "In Grandma's Day" and other haunting songs when she appears on the stage at night.

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From Farmyard to Footlights.

By Shirley Kellogg.

Even in these enlightened days some people contend that it is impossible to work on the land and retain an attractive appearance. In the following article Miss Shirley Kellogg, the charming actress who made such a hit in *Zig-Zag* at the Hippodrome, describes her experience of farm work, and recommends it as a delightful antidote to the airless and artificial atmosphere of the stage.

Photo Weather & Boys.

"A woman's chief beauty lies in health," says Miss Kellogg. As health comes from exercise and fresh air, and farm work supplies both, the moral is obvious.

Why not? There's nothing in this wide world to prevent a woman living and working on a farm by day and facing the footlights at night.

In fact, in these days when every available worker—male or female—is seriously needed on the land, I don't see why hundreds of girls who appear on the stages of West-end theatres at night should not work on some of the many farms within an hour of London by day.

Farm and footlights mix very well, believe me. I know—for I've tried the mixture. And I am positive I have been able to stand the strain of two performances a day, for many months, owing to the fact that I live on my farm—and work there, too—whenever I can.

Gardening, poultry-farming, horse-breaking, chicken-rearing, dairy-farming—there is no end to the number of open-air jobs waiting to be done. Not far from London—under an hour, in fact—I have a farm, and I'm proud of it. If I told you the number of eggs I get weekly, and am able to give to wounded "Tommies," I doubt if you'd credit the figures. They are very big, and I'm exceedingly proud of my chickens.

Of all workers stage players need more fresh air and exercise than any other individuals. For the theatre is airless, stifling, a vitiated atmosphere, that never knows true daylight or sunshine. When hours are spent in such breathless, often over-heated, places, isn't it common sense that some big thing is

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needed to counteract these evil influences and their unavoidable effects?

Yet stage people are generally the very last to take advantage of the land and all it offers. They seem to think (if they are women) that the mere fact of keeping chickens or milking cows will spoil them, or their appearance, for the stage. How absurd it is! Why, it just *helps* them, if they only knew.

A girl who goes on the land does not lessen her beauty; she enhances it to a marked degree.

Of course, my strong feelings in this respect may be due to the fact that I am American-born. Over in the States the land means a lot to us. Ever since I was a small child I've lived with horses, dogs, ducks, turkeys, chickens, and the entire farmyard as my real pets and companions. Not, you understand, to know them at a distance, but to be really good pals with them. When I was about eight years old there was a fussy white hen on our country farm, and that hen became crazily attached to me. She used to follow me, with much dignity, round the farm and over the fields too. At last she became known as Shirley II., and whenever I came in sight people used to say: "Hullo, here are the Shirleys!" and, sure enough, that chicken would be discovered at my heels!

On my farm over here there is also a white hen, a real beauty, and she seems to know me in the

Photos *Malcolm Arbuthnot and Alfieri.*

Whether in the dainty costume she wears in the angling scene in *Zig-Zag*, in the *chic* dress of a student, or wearing the sports coat of a blameless life, Miss Kellogg is always bewitching. She finds farm work and acting go together capitally—almost as well as milk and soda!

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Photo *Alfieri.*

Miss Kellogg is devoted to horses, and handles the reins with expert skill, while——

most remarkable way. So I have christened her Shirley too, and a few weeks ago, when I had been feeding my chickens, just before coming back to London, I was walking to the station and noticed some small boys smiling broadly and pointing. Turning round, I beheld my white hen strutting solemnly behind me, a token of affection that pleased me very much and amused the villagers immeasurably. They seem to think I'm a sort of magician now, and can train my fowls and animals to follow and obey me!

I find that English girls are too ready to believe that exercise—such as throwing a ball, or swimming, or hard running—tends to make them angular and muscular.

On the contrary, I contend that proper and judicious exercise is the finest beauty doctor in the world.

Consider this true story of a girl I knew very well indeed, over in America. She was on the stage—a pretty, fragile creature; and a few months of hard life on Broadway robbed her of her looks and figure and charm. Bad air, late hours, constant noise and excitement played havoc with her. She became thin and worn, and actually ugly. Even with make-up on she ceased to look nice; and I wondered what would be the end of it.

I went away to my home farm in the country, and presently came a letter saying: "I'm done! May I come to you to try and get fit again?"

She came a bundle of skin and bones, pale, listless, hollow-eyed—a wreck of a girl. We let her rest for a while, and then Nature's

Photo *Malcolm Arbuthnot.*

——her passion for dogs dates from the days of her childhood in the States, where she was brought up amongst horses, dogs, ducks, and other farmyard inhabitants.

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Photo, Alferi.

Photos Malcolm Arbuthnot and Wrather & Bays.

cure began to work. She was up early, and out milking the cows or tending the chickens. She drove miles every day; she tramped about in sensible clothes, and she went to bed early.

Just a month later you wouldn't have known that girl. She was prettier than she had ever been—and healthier, too; and when she got back to New York she found an engagement easy to secure.

"But I shall lose it again!" she moaned to me. "It isn't possible to keep fit when you're on the stage!"

"Don't be absurd?" I told her; "get away from town whenever you can and as often as you can. Do your job at night, and *matinées* when there are any, but don't cling to the theatre all day long when the curtain is down!"

She took my advice, and I am glad to say she is now a happy, successful woman whose life is divided between the country and the stage.

It is a big jump from the chicken-run to China, but Miss Kellogg bridges it most satisfactorily, feeding her chickens in the morning and appearing in the Chinese Lacquer scene in *Zig-Zag* in the evening.

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The Luck of the Jehoshaphat

By "Taffrail."

The men of the R.N.R., who are mostly ex-North Sea fishermen, are, more or less, a law unto themselves as regards uniform and such matters, and prefer comfort to smartness. This laxity, however, makes no difference to their intrepid spirit when there is a scrap on. In the following vivid story, written in his usual masterly style, the author of "Carry On!" and "Stand By!" describes the meeting while at sea on the King's business, of a trawler with an enemy mine-layer, and the fight for life which took place between the two.

I.

H.M.S. *Jehoshaphat* was anything but a beautiful vessel, in spite of her kingly name. Her lines were ungraceful and her appearance uncouth, for she was just a high-bowed, squat-shaped old tub of a steam trawler, which for many years before the war had plied her trade on the Dogger Bank and in the remote fastnesses of the North Sea.

And now, on a blustery spring morning, as she lay alongside the fendered jetty in the harbour of her East Coast base, she looked more woe-begone and weather-beaten than ever. Her sides were streaked with rust; her fat funnel—whitened by the spray of many gales—badly wanted a lick of paint; and her deck, or what could be seen of it for a litter of coal bags, coils of rope, and wooden cases containing provisions, stores, and ammunition, was indescribably filthy.

But what could one expect? The *Jehoshaphat* was a King's ship. She flew a bedraggled rag of a White Ensign and carried a gun, and for five days out of every week she was constantly at sea on the King's business. Even during her occasional spells in harbour she had to coal, clean her boilers, and embark stores and provisions; while it was then, when time permitted, that her men were allowed a chance of stretching their legs and seeing something of their wives and families.

The crew of the *Jehoshaphat*, knowing nothing and caring less of the kings of Judah, referred to their floating home as the *Josh'phat* or *Josh*. They were all, without exception, North Sea fishermen enrolled for the time being in the trawler section of the Royal Naval Reserve, and one or two of them were ancient greybeards, men born and bred to the sea and all its vicissitudes. A few, on the other hand, looked absurdly young, little more than boys; but, taking them as a whole, they were a lusty, hardy-looking lot, ready to go anywhere and to do anything.

Their notions of discipline were peculiar. They could not understand, for instance, why, before the passing of the non-treating order, it should have been considered wrong for their Skipper to stand drinks to his men in a quayside public-house. He had done it often enough in peace-time while he was still a civilian sailor, so to speak, and why his accession to the title of "Skipper R.N.R.," and the donning of a blue suit with brass buttons, and a cap with a gold badge and a crown, should make such a vast deal of difference to his status, was quite beyond their comprehension. They never quite got over it.

Moreover, the appearance of the *Josh'phat's* crew was strictly in keeping with that of their vessel. Uniform, except on the rare occasions when they went ashore and took some pride in appearing in the traditional garb of British bluejackets, was a thing they never wore except under compulsion.

They far preferred wearing the clothes to which they had been accustomed since boyhood—woollen jerseys, mufflers of all the colours of the rainbow, trousers of any old sort tucked into heavy leather sea-boots, and yellow oilskins at sea.

Their headgear was also assorted. One or two wore uniform caps or the warm winter caps of special shape supplied by the Admiralty, but by far the majority favoured fur caps with ear-flaps or ancient sou'westers. Even their commanding officer, Skipper Cornelius Vickery, R.N.R., sometimes appeared at sea in really fine weather in a treasured heirloom of a badly moth-eaten billycock, which battered relic, green with age, had been bequeathed to him by his father, aged eighty-seven.

The Skipper, a short, thick-set, weather-beaten little man on the right side of fifty, was stumping heavily up and down the narrow strip of deck outside his wheelhouse. He was smoking a pipe, and casting occasional glances at his men stowing the cases of provisions and stores which had just come on

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board. They were working fast, for it was a quarter-past eleven already, and the *Jehoshaphat* was due to sail for her patrolling-ground at noon.

"Holy snakes!" he muttered suddenly, halting in his perambulation, cramming his lighted pipe into his pocket, and putting his cap on straight. "Here comes the boss!"

His sharp eye had caught sight of the senior officer of trawlers, a retired Commander R.N., coming along the jetty, and the S.O., though an excellent and much-loved officer, had his fads. Amongst other things, he was rather a stickler for uniform.

He came on until he was abreast of the ship, returned the Skipper's salute with a cheery "Good morning," and then allowed his eagle eye to roam over the group of men at work. Everybody knew what was coming.

"Mr. Vickery," he said, "the Admiralty are good enough to supply your men with all manner of uniform garments at enormous expense, and damme, sir, look at 'em! Just look at 'em!"

The Skipper scratched his head from sheer force of habit and looked. His men certainly were rather conspicuous. One sported a soldier's khaki tunic and an ancient wideawake hat; another, a light yellow sleeveless garment over a blue sweater; and a third—the most blatant of all—a striped red-and-black football jersey, old grey tweed trousers, and a vivid green muffler.

Mr. Vickery murmured something about going to sea in three-quarters-of-an-hour, but the Commander did not seem to hear.

"Hi!" he called. "You there! You pirate in the football jersey!"

"Surr?" answered the striped gentleman, looking up guiltily.

"Why aren't you in uniform, my man?"

The culprit scratched his grizzled chin whilst racking his brain for a suitable excuse. "Uniforms cost money, surr," he explained at last. "Us doesn't get too much money."

A smile hovered round the corner of the Commander's mouth. "Yes," he agreed. "I suppose that's true; but are you aware that if the Germans capture you in that rig you'll be shot straight away without mercy?"

"Them Garmans won't get the likes o' me, surr," retorted the flamboyant one, shaking his head vehemently. "I knows a thing or two, surr. Sure I does."

In ordinary times it would have been quite unheard of for an officer to bandy words, but it was no use adopting naval ideas with trawler men, and well the Commander knew it. They wanted humouring, so he merely joined in the general titter of amusement.

"Well," he said, "I hope for your own sakes that you aren't ever captured. But, Mr. Vickery," he added to the Skipper, "you really must be a little more particular about uniform. One can put up with a good deal nowadays, but that man in the striped garment and the other in the canary-coloured waistcoat are really beyond the pale. They needn't look like parsons, of course, but their clothing might be a little more — er — sombre. What?"

"I'll see to it, sir," Cornelius answered, painfully aware of the azure-coloured muffler round his own neck. "Of course, these men don't look on uniform in the same way as you and me, sir."

The S.O. eyed the muffler and grinned. "No," he said. "Perhaps they don't. You're sailing at noon, aren't you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Got your orders?"

"Yes, sir."

"Right. Look out you get away up to time. Good morning. Good luck to you."

"Thank you, sir. The same to you."

The Commander walked off. "Heavens!" he soliloquised, "for a crowd of absolute pirates give me the trawler men. But," and he smiled, "they're the fellows for the job. One can't beat 'em."

Vickery might almost have heard his first remark, for the moment his senior officer was safely out of earshot he turned to his motley crew.

"You heard what he said?" he asked them with some show of severity. "You're a lot o' ruddy, rapscallion pirates, that you are! You're nothin' better than a perishin' lot o' Portugee militiamen, an' a disgrace to the Navy!"

"All right, Skipper. All right!" came back a jocular voice. "We isn't no worse'n what you are."

Cornelius, realising that the remark was perfectly true, indulged in his favourite trick of scratching his head. "You haven't got no discipline, neither," he retaliated, glowering fiercely. "An' what's more, you'll kindly remember that I'm your superior officer. When you address me you've got to call me 'sir,' not 'Skipper,' an' don't you go forgettin' it!"

II.

Punctually at noon, to the accompaniment of some mild profanity on the part of her men and those of other trawlers with whom she came into contact, the *Jehoshaphat* nudged her way out of the crowded little harbour into the bleak, inhospitable welter of the North Sea. Her *raison d'être* was the strafing of ubiquitous and most immoral Hun submarines, and for this admirable purpose

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she had her little gun and certain other diabolical contrivances which, for most excellent motives, must be left undescribed. Moreover, and for the same reason, we shall forbear to mention the exact spot in the grey, wind-swept waste where she had her happy hunting ground. The North Sea is a large tract of water, larger than the sixpenny atlases would have us realise.

By sunset that evening, when the sun went down to the westward in a blaze of tawny copper and bilious yellow which presaged a still stormier morrow, the coast was a grey smear on the horizon astern, and the *Josh'phat* was plugging her way against a strong south-easter. It was blowing really hard. The wind, howling and shrieking against the grey, tumbling welter, sent the spray flying to leeward in perpetual sheets of spindrift, while the short, steep sea, rising and falling almost perpendicularly, made the little trawler pitch, wallow, and stagger as only a trawler can. The motion was damnable; there was no other word for it. It would have caused uncomfortable feelings even to those who go down to the sea in destroyers.

But the *Josh'phat's* did not worry about it. On the contrary, they were so thoroughly used to the business that one can only believe they enjoyed it. They had set the small mizzen in the stern to assist in keeping the ship on her course, and then, leaving the necessary men on deck, the others had retired to their unsavoury den below.

Of course, the men growled. Who ever has met a sailor who didn't? But the surprising thing about them was that they never by any chance grumbled at anything which really mattered. The sickening motion and the discomfort of their life were trifles they hardly worried about, and they merely let off superfluous steam by growling at the *bête-noir* of all sailors, the well-meaning but unskilful cook, or in grousing at fine weather when they were not ashore to enjoy it. Even that seasoned old veteran, Joe Gittings, he of the red-and-black striped jersey, had an occasional grievance. He had been known to lament his fate for three whole days because a tattered but rather cherished sou'-wester had once been washed overboard in a gale of wind. It was only by the mercy of God that the same sea had not carried Joe over the side after his headgear.

But the chief grievance of the *Josh'phat's*, however, was levelled against His Imperial Majesty, the Kaiser. Not, as might be imagined, because the All Highest had started the war, but because he or his myrmidons had neglected to send a special submarine for the benefit of their particular trawler. Mines they had in plenty. They had seen several ships blown up, while one or two of the men had undergone that distressing experience themselves; but in over two years of war the *Jehoshaphat* had only sighted the conning-tower of one German submarine for perhaps thirty seconds at a range of something over two miles. She had fired at it with her gun, whereupon Fritz, not taking any risks, had submerged himself, and was seen no more.

They longed to "do the dirty" on a Hun. Other trawlers they knew of had been lucky enough to sink submarines, and their fortunate crews had been hailed and lauded as public heroes. Some of them had even been mentioned in dispatches or had received D.S.M.'s, both of which distinctions caused their blushing recipients to receive much adulation from the womenfolk ashore.

It was all a matter of luck, the *Josh'phat's* argued. They were every bit as good as the men they envied, and, given their chance, they would do equally well, if not better. But their luck was out. The chance they all wished for had never come their way, and so they growled, and growled, and growled.

III.

The next morning the weather was still as bad as ever, but during the latter part of the afternoon the wind started to go down, until, at eight o'clock, the sky overhead was clear and there was nothing but a gentle south-easterly breeze and a long, uneasy swell.

Eight hours later, when the Skipper, fully dressed, left his tiny cabin and clambered sleepily into the wheelhouse to keep the morning watch, the wind had died away altogether and the ocean was flat calm.

"Humph!" he grunted to Thomas Martin, the second hand, who had kept the middle watch. "Better weather. Shouldn't be surprised but what we got fog, though." He motioned towards the wreaths of damp sea-mist eddying fantastically across the dark water.

"Maybe we shall, Skipper," the other agreed, stifling a prodigious yawn. "Well, course an' speed as usual; nothin's in sight, an' all's well. I'll go below an' turn in."

Cornelius glanced at the four o'clock position pricked off on the chart. "Right ye are," he said. "And on your way down rout out that ruddy water-spoiler an' tell him I want me drop o' cocoa an' a bit o' biscuit."

The second hand acquiesced and retired.

The sleepy-headed cook, rudely awakened from his slumber by the toe of a heavy sea-boot, soon arrived with the provender, and, having disposed of it, the Skipper lit his pipe and watched the dawn breaking.

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Sea, sky, and haze paled together from indigo to bluish-grey. From grey they gradually assumed a faint rose-pink as the invisible sun neared and overtopped the horizon, and then, quite suddenly, as if with the lifting of some huge curtain, the sea took on its customary daylight colouring. Overhead the sky was blue, but a thin, damp mist overlay the surface of the water until it was impossible to see more than a mile.

"I thought so," Cornelius muttered to himself, sucking at his wheezy pipe.

It must have been about twenty minutes later that there came a sudden hail from the forecastle head.

"What d'ye say?" bellowed the Skipper, sticking his grizzled head out of the wheelhouse window.

"Ship a point off th' port bow, sir!" came back the answer.

"Right ye are, me son. I've got her," howled Cornelius, seeing the blurred outline of a small vessel looming up through the haze. "Starboard a bit!" he added to the helmsman. "Starboard! Steady so!" The *Jehoshaphat's* bows paid off towards the stranger.

"Fo'cas'le, there!" the Skipper hailed again. "Stan' by your gun!" He was not taking any risks. He knew from the experience of others that it was never wise to approach another ship, however innocent she might look, without taking precautions. He had read of the action between the *Alcantara* and the *Greif*, where the latter vessel, a heavily-armed German raider disguised as a Norwegian cargo-carrier, opened fire on the British auxiliary cruiser at short range when she closed to inspect her.

But this time the *Josh'phat* was apparently doomed to disappointment again, for when they got nearer, the stranger was discovered to be nothing more nor less than a rusty steam trawler flying a tattered red ensign. Her name was illegible, but she bore the distinguishing letter of the Hull fishing fleet. A number of men in yellow oilskins were busy about the decks, but her trawl was not down.

"Ahoy there!" shouted Vickery. "What trawler's that?"

"The *Gleaner* o' Hull!" came back the answer from a man standing outside her wheelhouse.

"How long are you out?"

"Three days!"

Cornelius rubbed his eyes, for the answer did not satisfy him. It must have taken the *Gleaner* at least twenty-four hours to steam to her present position, thus allowing her another forty-eight hours for fishing, most of which time the weather had been very bad. She must have had an abnormally good catch to load her as deeply as he saw her now, and he knew from his long experience as a fisherman that the spot she was in was not considered a good fishing ground at this particular time of year.

"What's th' name o' yer Skipper?" he demanded.

"I'm the Skipper!" came back the answer from the same man. "My name's Joe Barney!"

Cornelius started. "Joe who?" he asked.

"Barney! B.A.R.N.E.Y! Can't you understand plain English?"

"Why can't you talk distinctly?" Vickery retorted loudly, half beside himself with excitement. "Here, Jim," he whispered to the man at the wheel, "go down and tell Tom I want him sharp. When ye've done that, call all hands an' tell 'em to stand by for trouble. Be sharp, now, an' keep out of sight!"

The helmsman disappeared, while Cornelius, taking the wheel himself, kept the *Jehoshaphat* circling round the *Gleaner* at moderate speed.

Within thirty seconds Martin appeared rubbing the sleep out of his eyes.

"Wake up, Tom!" his Skipper whispered excitedly. "That trawler there says her Skipper's name is Joe Barney!"

"Joe 'oo?" queried the other in surprise.

"Barney!"

Martin whistled to show his astonishment. "What's 'er name?" he queried.

"*Gleaner* o' Hull."

The second hand shook his head and picked up the binoculars. "That she ain't!" he announced. "I know the *Gleaner* well, an' she never 'ad a funnel like that. 'Sides, look at th' number o' men she's got on deck. Brand-new oilskins, too!"

"Then what is she?"

"Gawd knows, Skipper. 'S'pose you'll board 'er an' find out?"

Vickery nodded. "Yes," he whispered. "Next time I turn round I'll go up alongside her from astern. Get th' gun loaded an' open fire sharp if she does anythin'. Get all th' other hands except th' gun's crew behind th' bulwarks an' stan' by to jump aboard when we touch!"

"Right ye are, Skipper!" grinned the second hand, hurrying off.

By this time the two trawlers were abreast of each other at a distance of about two hundred yards, when Vickery suddenly noticed the wash under the *Gleaner's* counter as the propeller revolved and she started to go ahead.

"Stay where you are!" he hailed through a megaphone.

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"Blaspheming, cursing, sweating, and laughing madly, they kept their gun going in spite of the hail of steel flying round them." [Page 96, col. 2.]

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The *Gleaner*, though her Skipper must have heard, made no effort to obey. Her decks, too, were buzzing like a beehive, for a small knot of men were busy with something close to the break of the forecastle, while others, crouching low, ran aft towards the stern.

"Tom!" yelled the Skipper, "put a shot across her bows!"

Martin waved a hand, the gunlayer glanced along his sights, and the next moment there came a roar and a flash, and a fountain of white spray sprang into the air twenty yards clear of the *Gleaner's* bows.

The reply came almost at once. There was a shrill whistle from the stranger's bridge; a hinged section of the forecastle plating fell with a thump, to disclose a hidden gun and its crew, and the red ensign on the mizzen-mast came down with a run as its place was taken by the white, black-crossed emblem of the German navy.

"Lord!" Vickery muttered, "She's a Hun!"

The words were barely out of his mouth when a rifle popped and a bullet came swishing through the air perilously close to the wheelhouse. Then came the splutter of an irregular volley, followed by the crash of a bullet driving its way through the window within six inches of his head, and the thudding and clanging of others as they buried themselves in the surrounding woodwork or struck the funnel and steel superstructure. Next, with a loud report, a sheet of flame, and a cloud of yellow cordite smoke, the German gun went off, the projectile whizzing over the deck to burst harmlessly in the sea a hundred yards beyond.

Vickery realised at once that it would be a fight to a finish. The two vessels were equally matched, for both carried small guns and both had much the same speed. The result, therefore, though greatly dependent on good and rapid shooting, was also largely a matter of fortune, for one lucky shell bursting in the engine or boiler-room might incapacitate either trawler or put her gun out of action, thus leaving her at the mercy of her opponent. But skilful manœuvring also entered into the problem, and if one vessel succeeded in getting dead astern of the other, she could rake her fore and aft, while the leader, with her gun mounted forward, could not reply.

Cornelius accordingly jammed his engine-room telegraph to "full speed," and howled to the man at the wheel to put his helm to starboard, intending to get astern of his enemy. But the German was up to the game, and countered the move by altering course himself. So, for some time—it seemed hours—both vessels steamed round on the circumference of a common circle about two hundred yards in diameter, firing heavily on each other as they went.

The *Josh'phat* had not been caught napping, for the moment the first rifle-shot came from the *Gleaner* the British small-arm men replied. They took shelter behind the bulwarks, bobbing their heads up to fire, and poured a hail of bullets on the enemy's wheelhouse and the men collected round the gun. The gun, too, was firing as fast as it could be loaded. The first shot fell short and sent its shower of splinters flying high over their adversary's deck. The next went over, but the third, driving home abreast the German's foremast, burst with a tongue of vivid red flame and a cloud of oily, black smoke.

But the hostile weapon was also hard at work, and the *Jehoshaphat* had been struck. There came a loud report from aft as a projectile hit, burst in a shower of splinters and *débris*, wrecked the solitary boat, and brought the mizzen-mast down with a run. Vickery glanced aft, to catch a fleeting glimpse of a cloud of smoke with tongues of flame licking evilly through it. His ship seemed to be on fire.

It is impossible to describe what really happened, for within a minute or so of the first shot being fired both vessels had been struck repeatedly and were literally enveloped in a pall. The hull of the enemy's craft was invisible. All that could be seen of her was a cloud of black smoke from fires and bursting shell mingled with the filmy streamers of white steam from severed pipes and the yellow cordite haze, with, every now and then, a fountain of spray as the British shells pitched short, the lurid crimson flash as they struck and burst, and the brighter, yellow sparkle as the hostile gun fired.

The *Jehoshaphat's* men simply loaded and fired into the thick of the murk where they imagined their enemy to be. The air reverberated with the roaring of guns, the deep, whirring note of the shell slivers, and the angrier whizzing of the rifle bullets. Men at the gun were hit and went down. One, slightly wounded in the leg, clambered to his feet again, and continued operating the breech of the weapon as if nothing had happened, but the bodies of two more, killed outright, were flung rudely aside. Others came up to relieve those who had fallen, and blaspheming, cursing, sweating, and laughing madly, they kept their gun going in spite of the hail of steel flying round them.

"Give 'em hell, lads!" bellowed the second hand, himself wounded in the left arm, but using the sound one for cramming the

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cartridges into the breech. "Give 'em hell, the —— babykillers!"

They did give them hell, for in another instant the end came. From the midst of the smoke-cloud in which the *Gleaner* was enveloped there rose a huge, blinding sheet of orange flame and an awful, shattering explosion, which shook the air and nearly broke their ear-drums. Then a column of blackish smoke, mingled with riven *débris*, leapt skywards above the murk. The enemy's fire ceased, and the next moment a shower of wreckage and the mangled remains of what were once human beings came raining down into the sea all round them. The gun's crew ceased firing of their own accord and stared in wild astonishment.

"Gawd!" shrieked Martin, falling backwards to the deck in his excitement. "She's gone! She's blowed up!" He sat there laughing like a maniac, with the tears running from his eyes.

The smoke-cloud, with no wind to disperse it, thinned slowly; but when at last it had cleared away there was hardly a vestige of the *Gleaner* to be seen—merely an ever widening, black, oily-looking patch on the surface of the water dotted with floating *débris* and the bodies of several men in life-belts.

The victor approached the spot to search for survivors. They found one, a petty officer, who, by some strange freak of fortune, had been flung clear of the explosion, and had sustained no further damage than a broken arm and some slight burns. Him they rescued, and cared for as if he had been their brother.

But the *Jehoshaphat* had suffered severely. Three men, of whom Joe Gittings was one, had been killed outright, while eight more, including Cornelius himself, who had been hit through the shoulder by a rifle bullet, were wounded. The ship, too, was badly knocked about. The shell bursting aft had wrought terrible havoc, and had started a fire which they had some difficulty in extinguishing, while there was another direct hit through the forecastle, and numerous perforations through the hull, funnel, and deck superstructure. Moreover, she was leaking more than was pleasant, but her engines and boilers were untouched, so that she could still steam.

They set to work to plug the more serious holes, and when the pumps started they found, to their inexpressible joy, that the flow of water could be kept under provided the fine weather held. They sewed their dead in canvas and committed them reverently to the deep, the Skipper, with his arm in a sling, reading the burial service, and the men standing round with bowed heads.

The *Jehoshaphat* had no wireless to herald her arrival, and when, thirty-six hours later, she steamed wearily into the crowded harbour of her base, there were few people to welcome her home. But one or two men on the jetties and on other craft stopped work and stared at her curiously as she slid past them to her berth. They rubbed their eyes, stared again, and then went off post-haste to tell their friends, so that, in less than ten minutes, there was quite a respectable crowd.

Vickery went ashore to seek the S.O. at his office, but met the Commander half-way.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Vickery!" the naval officer exclaimed, glancing at the Skipper's wounded arm. "What's this I hear about your having been in action?"

Cornelius explained at length.

"You're quite certain she was a mine-layer?" the Commander asked.

"Quite certain, sir. Nothing but mines could have made an explosion like that! 'Sides, sir, we picked one of 'em up, an' he let out what she was."

His hearer smiled. "Yes," he said, "a scalp to show is always useful evidence. But I don't quite gather why she called herself the *Gleaner?*"

"Masqueradin' as one o' those Hull trawlers called by that name, sir; but Tom Martin, our second hand, knows the proper *Gleaner*, an' spotted her at once."

"I see, and what about the name of the Skipper, Joe—er——"

"Joe Barney, sir?" interrupted Cornelius, grinning all over his face.

The Commander nodded.

"Joe Barney, sir, never was in the *Gleaner*," Vickery went on. "He's Skipper o' the *Saracen* by rights. But five days ago I got a letter from me sister sayin' how Joe was in hospital with a broke leg. Them Germans made rather a mess o' things, for Joe Barney, ye see, sir——" He paused and burst out laughing.

"Well?"

"Joe Barney is me own brother-in-law!" Cornelius concluded.

"Well, I'll be hanged!" exclaimed the Commander, laughing with him.

And this is the story of how Mr. Cornelius Vickery and several of his merry pirates came by the little pieces of treasured blue and white ribbon which they sometimes wear on the breasts of their Sunday-go-to-meeting garments.

(Another splendid story by "Taffrail," in which Chinese pirates play an important part, appears in next month's ROYAL.)

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SEVEN·HATS "FOR·LUCK"

By Rosemary North.

The "home-coming" hat in which Pamela went to meet Bruce was of black chiffon, lined with pink, and trimmed with a wreath of white aigrettes.

Pamela had very excellent reasons for wanting to look her best when *he* came home on leave, so that when seven new hats came her way and not a penny to pay for them, she accepted them as a gift of the gods. How they served their purpose and brought her luck is described in in the following sprightly story.

"So there I am with a multitude of spring costumes and frocks, and not a hat fit to companion one of them!" Pamela Payne, slim, dark-haired, and imperious, lifted eyes of pansy purple set in a piquant face as April-like as the sun and showers which held high carnival in Bond Street as in lesser thoroughfares on that fair spring morning.

Drusilla Fitzroy, otherwise *Madame Drusille*, daughter of an impecunious earl, and proprietress of the most exclusive hat-shop in London, regarded her friend with an air of detached sympathy.

"Bruce will be home on Thursday, and to-day's Tuesday," lamented Pamela, gazing disconsolately round her friend's grey-and-mauve-upholstered room. "I wouldn't mind so much, only Lady Concrete's asked me to stay with them while he's home on leave, and clothes are more to her than life itself You see, I'd just bought my spring costumes and things when the crash came—nearly all father's money was in the Mosquito Mines, and, although he says they'll pull round after the war, it means we've got to live on tuppence a week for a time. No one need know for a week or two, least of all Lady Concrete, and by that time——"

"By that time you hope to have brought Bruce up to the scratch?" put in Drusilla, resting her chin in her hand and regarding her friend intently.

Pamela had the grace to blush. "I don't think he'll need any bringing," she said, "but—it's not him I'm afraid of; it's Lady Concrete. She's such a worldly old soul; she'd do her best to stop it—and I *am* fond of Bruce. He's a perfect dear! And I do want to look decently festive. Be an angel, Dru, and introduce me to a hat that will go with *all* my glad rags!"

"Pamela, I'm going to see you through, my dear." Drusilla rose, the light of enthusiasm kindling in her sleepy blue eyes. "You shall have all the hats you want—one for each rig-out. I'll lend them to you! Seven hats for luck! I shan't charge you a penny unless you ruin one of them. Then you can pay damages, if you want to."

"Of course I will." Pamela's vivid little face glowed with pleasurable excitement. "But I'll take wonderful care of them. To-morrow at ten, then, and a heart full of thanks. Good-bye!"

To Pamela's relief, Lady Concrete, visibly impressed by the seven white-and-mauve hat-boxes from *Drusille's*, was unexpectedly affable, when two days later she arrived in some trepidation at the big house in Belgravia. Evidently she had heard no

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rumours concerning Mr. Payne's affairs. She was a stately lady with beautiful snow-white hair and a massive jaw, but she was honestly devoted to her only son, and, before the excitement of his impending arrival, unbent and became almost human.

Pamela, full of glad anticipation, took this new-found amiability as a gift of the gods, and went off to meet the home-coming Bruce in radiant spirits. She wore one of the new hats for the occasion. It was a tall, chimney-pot affair of pleated black chiffon, lined with palest shell-pink, and trimmed only with a wreath of white aigrettes. No wonder that Bruce, fresh from a place where rose-leaf cheeks and silk-clad ankles come to men only in dreams, hailed her with undisguised admiration in his handsome, sunburnt face.

A champagne tagel, with touches of pink—this was the hat which Pam chose to grace the shopping expedition with her soldier lover.

"Jove! You do look topping!" he exclaimed, with the old charming smile Pam remembered so well. "I like that hat with whiskers!"

In pre-war days Bruce had been an attractive idler, immaculate in his attire, and inclined to indolence. War had stiffened him into manhood; Pam noted with content the quiet steadiness of his grey eyes and the new, firm lines of the mouth beneath the close-cropped moustache.

"Do I?" She shot him a radiant glance as he piloted her to a taxi. "It *is* good to see you again after all these months!"

"Great to be home!" Bruce leant back against the cushions, and stared with appreciative eyes at the crowded street. "It's fine to see London again," he said, "and shops with pretty things in 'em, and girls with pink cheeks and silk stockings. Best of all to see you, Pam; we'll have no end of a time. Want you to take me shopping to-morrow; I've lost my sleeping-valise, and I must have a new Thermos—and when that's done the band *will* begin to play!"

Very *chic* was the third hat, a navy blue and emerald affair, of a charm that moved even Pamela to a little harmless "peacocking."

To grace the shopping expedition Pam selected a nigger-brown coat-frock and a wide-brimmed hat of champagne tagel, underlined with silk of shot pink and champagne colour. It was a simple, youthful hat, alluring as the sunny April morning, and under it Pam's face peeped out fresh as a summer rose.

They scamped the shopping shamelessly that they might obtain one of the few tables for two that lurk in secluded corners of the Asphodel Tea-Rooms. Bruce ordered tea in a prodigal manner, and rested an appreciative but quizzical gaze on his companion.

"Clinking rig-out, that!" he remarked. "The hat enchants me. Don't say you're going to spring a new one on me every day, though. I couldn't stand it."

Pamela smiled guiltily. "You'll see," she said evasively. "You didn't expect to see us going about looking like pantomime dames, did you?"

"No"—Bruce fingered his teaspoon absentmindedly—"but—well, 'pon my word, Pam, I hardly expected to see people so

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There was an air of distinction about the black and white simplicity of the fourth hat, with its gold-embroidered leaves. Pam wore it for motoring, while—

obtrusively well-dressed. 'Chiffons as usual' seems to be the order of the day."

"And why not?" Pam's voice was faint with astonishment, for in pre-war days Bruce had considered a girl's supreme duty was to be decorative.

His reply was stopped by the advent of tea, but as Pamela nibbled at *petits-fours* she pondered on the shade of resentment that had showed in his voice. Truly the war was responsible for many incredible changes!

Lunch and a *matinée* was Bruce's programme for Saturday, and Pamela's velvety eyes flashed audaciously at him as they sat down amid the jade and ivory splendour of *The Opulent*. The third hat was a navy blue straw, with a band of navy and emerald passementerie, and a navy blue tassel that drooped over Pam's right ear in a manner altogether *chic*.

"A really becoming hat makes me feel absolutely godly," observed Pam, seeking admiration. "I feel I could endow an orphan asylum or eat rice-pudding or anything!"

Bruce's face relaxed into his accustomed cheery smile. "'Tis a stunner!' he agreed. "Must say I like those simple hats just as much as the kind that cost the price of a grand piano. Jolly sporting of you, Pam, to go easy on the milliners for a bit."

Pamela's eyes were round with amazement. Bruce advocating economy! And the tam-o'-shanter hat was one of Drusilla's most costly productions! She had just decided not to disillusion him when Lady Vi Carlton, a pretty young matron and a neighbour of Lady Concrete, paused at their table.

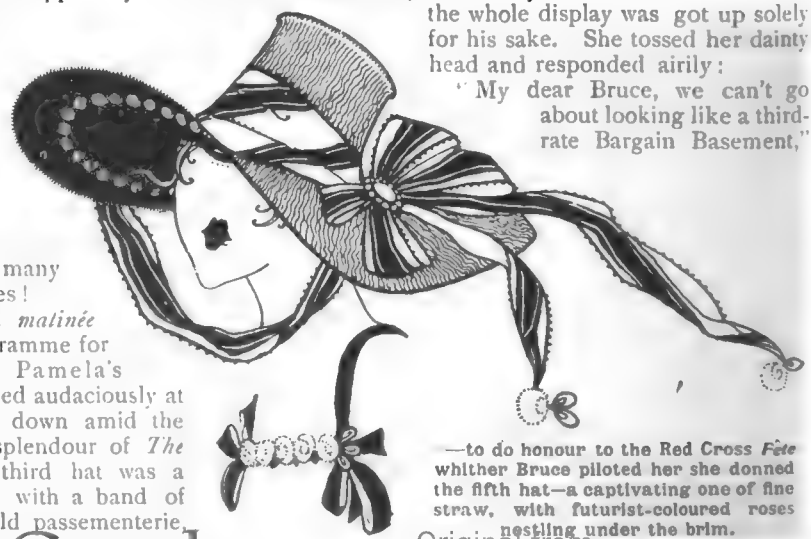
"Hullo, Pam! Glad to see you, Bruce! I owe you a grudge, Pam—you've got *Drusille's* masterpiece. I yearned for that hat, but ten-guinea *chapeaux* are not for me. Bruce, you really ought to chide her—she hasn't learnt even the rudiments of war economy!"

Bruce smiled and made suitable retort, but when Lady Vi had whisked on, his face set in the new, stern lines that attracted Pam against her will.

"I suppose Lady Vi was joking," he said tentatively. "A handful of straw and ribbon couldn't cost ten guineas! Besides, you're not like that, Pam. You couldn't spend money riotously when the Old Country needs it so badly!"

There was a note of pleading in his voice, but Pamela hardened her heart. Reveal the secret of the seven hats she would not, and besides, it was very tiresome of Bruce when the whole display was got up solely for his sake. She tossed her dainty head and responded airily:

"My dear Bruce, we can't go about looking like a third-rate Bargain Basement,"



—to do honour to the Red Cross *Fête* whither Bruce piloted her she donned the fifth hat—a captivating one of fine straw, with futurist-coloured roses nestling under the brim.

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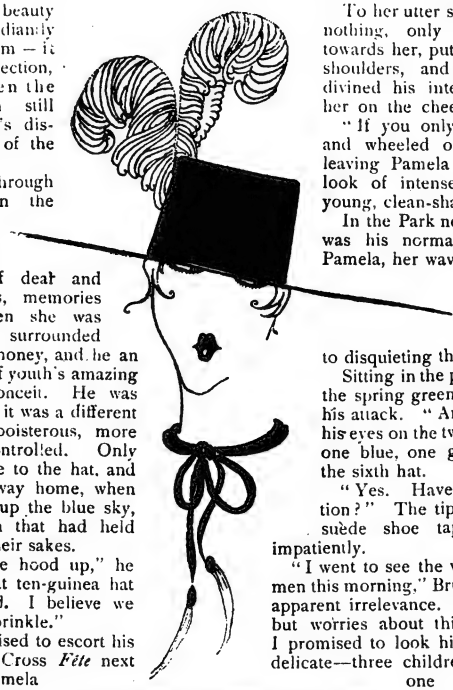
she said. "If you can't be properly appreciative, try and remain neutral. They've deprived us of our sugary cakes—at least leave us our purple and fine linen."

Bruce relapsed into silence, and, being a tactful youth, forbore to comment on the turban-shaped affair which Pam assumed for motoring next day. It was a distinctive hat, of black with embroidered gold leaves meandering round the sides on a white ground. It would have extinguished the beauty of anyone less radiantly pretty than Pam—it suited her to perfection, overcoming even the annoyance which still rankled at Bruce's disparaging remarks of the day before.

They motored through lanes decked in the misty green of early spring, and lunched at a Surrey village of dear and blessed memories, memories of the time when she was happily care-free, surrounded by the magic of money, and he an unspoilt boy, full of youth's amazing confidence and conceit. He was confident now, but it was a different confidence—less boisterous, more enduring and controlled. Only once did he allude to the hat, and that was on the way home, when grey clouds crept up the blue sky, obscuring the sun that had held high carnival for their sakes.

"Better have the hood up," he suggested, "or that ten-guinea hat may look like 6¾d. I believe we are going have a sprinkle."

Bruce had promised to escort his mother to a Red Cross *Fête* next day, whither Pamela also fluttered, clad in blue taffetas with touches of multi-coloured embroidery, and wearing the fifth hat—a captivating affair of fine straw with a floppy brim, under which nestled tiny futurist-coloured roses.



The Park on a fair spring morning was an ideal background for the grey tagel, trimmed with feathers of blue and grey, which Pamela flaunted there.

The gods were good, and Lady Concrete being whisked off by an exhausted friend to support her over a cup of tea, Bruce and Pamela were suffered to partake of a scanty and highly-priced meal in comparative solitude. Bruce was abstracted and thoughtful, and for him the hat did not exist. Even Lady Entwistle's laughing comment when she brought them tea that he was "teaing" with *the* hat of the season, did not rouse him to enthusiasm.

At home once more in the cosy library, Pamela taxed him with lack of appreciation.

"You don't care for pretty things like you used to," she said standing before him slim and provocative in her blue finery. "What's the matter, Bruce? You haven't even noticed my hat. I believe you'd be just as happy if I wore a dish-cover!"

To her utter surprise Bruce said nothing, only he took a step towards her, put his hands on her shoulders, and before she had divined his intention had kissed her on the cheek,

"If you only knew," he said, and wheeled out of the room, leaving Pamela to marvel at the look of intense emotion on his young, clean-shaven face.

In the Park next morning Bruce was his normal self again, but Pamela, her wavy hair crowned by a hat of dark grey tagel, underlined with pastel-blue, was given over to disquieting thoughts.

Sitting in the pale sunshine amid the spring greenery Bruce opened his attack. "Another?" he said, his eyes on the two superb feathers, one blue, one grey, that adorned the sixth hat.

"Yes. Have you any objection?" The tip of Pamela's grey suède shoe tapped the gravel impatiently.

"I went to see the wife of one of my men this morning," Bruce remarked with apparent irrelevance. "A good fellow, but worries about things at home, so I promised to look his wife up. She's delicate—three children under six, and one of them ailing. 'Pon my word, it wrung my heart to see the poor little place."

"Meaning, I suppose, that it's criminal of me to spend eight guineas or so on a hat when people like that are living on bread and dripping," remarked Pamela with some asperity.

"Does seem a bit—well—heartless," owned Bruce. "Forgive me, Pam, but Martin's such a splendid chap! and eight guineas would mean luxury for weeks to that poor little woman."

"There are plenty of charities she can apply to."

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Pamela was more touched than she cared to own by the depth of feeling in the young officer's voice and manner. Bruce in the *rôle* of guide, philosopher, and friend to his men was a revelation to her. But there was a streak of waywardness in Pamela, and because she knew that from Bruce's point of view she was utterly heartless, because he credited her with an extravagance of which she was not guilty, she chose to assume a flippant attitude, and to treat the matter as of small account.

Pam's tantrums were never of long duration, however, and the sight of Bruce's doleful face when next morning he reminded her that it was his last day, banished the remnants of her annoyance. She even suggested taking some delicacies to Mrs. Martin for the sick child, and insisted on spending most of the small sum of money left her, on beef extract, jelly, and other invalid fare.

It was rather a subdued Pamela that set forth *en route* for Camberwell; she had come to the last hat, and so far Bruce's heart was untouched. She had pinned her faith on this one, a bonnet-shaped affair of nigger brown tagel, with soft frillings of salmon-coloured chiffon beneath the brim. Apparently it left Bruce cold, for he made no comment until they turned their steps westward again, and a few big drops of rain began to fall.

"Better get a taxi!" he said. "You don't want to get that hat ruined, do you?"

But taxis were scarce in that neighbourhood, and by the time they found a refuge in one the hat was soaked, and Pam was faced with the disquieting knowledge that it would be quite unsaleable. Drusilla would expect her to pay for it. She had promised to make good any damage, and she had only 15s. 6d. in the world, while the hat was a nine-guinea one. She was very quiet in the taxi, and consented soberly to Bruce's proposal that they should drive straight home and have tea in his mother's boudoir, that lady being absent at a charity *matinée*.

Once in the rose-and-grey haven of Lady Concrete's snuggery Pam flung off her coat, and gave herself up to dismal reflections, the while Bruce departed to change his boots and give orders concerning tea. Big tears stole softly out of Pamela's pansy eyes and fell on her pink *crêpe* Georgette blouse; the hat was ruined, she was faced with a bill she could not pay—and Bruce didn't care tuppence for her! He came in at the moment, whereat Pamela powdered her pretty nose and blinked back the last tear heroically.

But Bruce had sharp eyes, and he saw it. "What's the matter, Pam?" He stood in front of her, quiet and compelling. "You've been doing a weep. Out with it—there's a dear!"

For a moment Pam hesitated, her vivid little face suddenly wistful; then, partly because she longed for sympathy, partly because his searching grey eyes demanded the truth, she told him the whole story of the hats.

"I did want to look decent," she said, "and I couldn't ask Dad for any money now he's nearly ruined. It seemed such a beautiful plan, and now I owe Drusilla nine guineas, and I've only got 15s. 6d. and two postage stamps," she finished, dabbing her eyes with a pink-edged handkerchief.

To her amazement Bruce burst out laughing. "You *didn't* buy the hats, then!" he cried, and raising her to her feet stood looking down exultantly, his hands gripping hers with a force of which he was quite unconscious.

"No, I didn't; but, Bruce——What *is* the matter, you foolish boy?"

"Nothing's the matter *now*." Bruce's lips curved in a smile that set the girl's heart thrilling with joy. "You see, Pam, my dear, I've lost a lot of my money, too—only got about £500 a year left—and those hats fairly did me. I knew I couldn't afford a wife who bought ten-guinea hats—and so—well, I felt I hadn't the right to propose. But now you're in the same boat, too, it's different. Pam, sweetheart, will you marry me, and take what hats the gods send?"

"Indeed, I will! Seven hats for luck, Bruce, and the seventh *was* lucky, wasn't it?"

"I should think it was," agreed Bruce, as he stooped for his just reward.

The seventh hat was of nigger brown with frillings of salmon-coloured chiffon—a hat made for conquest, and it brought Pam her heart's desire.

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THE SHELL TRAIN

By Wilfrid L. Randell.

"Men
May bear the blazon wrought of centuries, hold
Their armouries higher than arms imperial, yet
Know that the least their countryman, whose hand
Hath done his country service, lives their peer,
And peer of all their fathers.

It was growing dark, and the weather promised to be rough as Driver Strong and his mate, Lee, took over their big goods engine, No. 65, from the cleaners and prepared for the night's run. Inside the spacious locomotive-shed shadowy forms stood out weirdly, silhouetted here and there by flickering oil flares as the yard-men touched up their iron steeds.

The "Lady Olive," a high-shouldered, aristocratic express, with torpedo-boiler and elegant driving-wheels, speedy and supercilious and trim, blew off dainty wisps of pale vapour from her valves, ready for her four hours' spin westward with the mails; the "Margaretta," a dull, corpulent "ordinary," just in from a day's hard shunting, simmered noisily like a giant kettle over her pit as her fires were drawn; and many others, in various stages of dress and undress, rested or waited on the radial tracks that all led to the immense turntable in the centre.

On to that turntable, with a cough and a wheeze, slid No. 65; a man moved a switch, and she swung round silently till with a click her tender pointed toward the open archway. Strong nodded to one or two friends on the engines, pushed the regulator an inch over, and No. 65's bulky form backed into the gloom. Past coal-banks, offices, and carriage-sheds she ran easily, pulled up at the foot of a forbidding signal with a sharp growl of annoyance, and then, the red lamp above winking to green, glided on until she kissed the buffers of her waiting train of munitions.

In fair weather, with a moderate load, it was a good two hours' run to Bigbury, the seaport for which she was scheduled, but the wind to night was rising, bringing with it a spurt of sleety rain, and her load numbered forty waggons. Strong knew that he would have to coax his charge to do her very best. Engines, like horses, seem to know their drivers; No. 65 would do anything for Strong, but with strange hands at her throttle and brakes she had been known to lie down and kick—in other words, to "stag" badly on an incline, to lose her head racing downhill, and in general to show a wicked temper and misbehave herself.

"All right, Strong?" inquired the night-foreman, glancing at his watch and flashing his lamp up to the glittering footplate.

"All clear," answered Strong. "Going to be a dirty night."

"Yes. Good luck! Right away!"

Off went No. 65 beautifully, in the best of humours, pulling well and carefully as though she knew the valuable nature of the freight behind her; within five minutes the town was two miles away, and she was settling down to a comfortable thirty miles an hour on the first long levels.

After this easy stretch came the ten mile Plymstock "bank" or incline, deceptively gradual to begin with, but with a final five miles up which all self-respecting locomotives had to drop fancy-work and "get on with the job," or be disgraced. Many engines took a "pilot" to help them up this gradient, but No. 65, under Strong's control, with Lee firing her, was hard to beat; collar-work was her speciality. Then came a splendid twenty miles of falling ground and straight levels to Bigbury; over these, if you were late, you could safely indulge in a sprint, or if you had time in reserve you could loaf along and save coal for the sake of the annual bonus to economical drivers.

Presently Strong heard the gentle hints of his engine that a trifle more steam would be gratefully acknowledged—a deepening and slowing of her thick, husky exhaust. Bit by bit he edged the regulator over, and Lee, the "shovel-engineer," spread fresh layers of coal cleverly upon the concave, white hot

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mass in the firebox. No. 65 throbbed eagerly in response, and entered upon the formidable five miles with a rhythmical, energetic pulsation that showed she was enjoying the trip. But with the best will in the world forty trucks of heavy munitions is no joke on a steep grade in a gale of wind, and towards the summit it seemed touch-and-go whether she would manage it.

"About all you can do to-night, old girl," said Strong, as he slipped the expansion-gear into the last forward notch and noticed the result—the slow, four-fold heavy beat. "Gets on your nerves, I'm sure!"

But at last the bank was successfully negotiated, and the laboured grunts of the engine softened and quickened as her driver shut off most of the steam and she began running sweetly down the other side of the hill. She gathered speed, and Strong, seeing clear signals at the Plymstock group, reached for a packet of sandwiches in his coat pocket.

In the very moment of appreciating his first bite, however, he paused, listened intently, and glanced at his mate, who appeared also to be listening. They were slamming down at a fine rate—but was it not at rather *too* fine a rate? To their experienced ears the sound of the train seemed not quite correct, somehow. Lee leant far out of the cab, holding on by one hand, and looked for the light on the last car, which shows towards the engine and marks the position of the tail of the train. It wasn't there.

"Broke in two at the top!" he shouted.

Into the next few seconds Driver Strong crowded some extremely quick thinking. The break must have occurred after passing the summit; had it happened on the incline he would have felt the sudden increase of speed due to a lessened load. The strain must have brought the hidden flaw in some coupling to the danger-point, so that when they eased and the train straightened out jerkily as No. 65 began her race downhill, it snapped. Therefore, several trucks were flying along behind them, uncontrolled—trucks filled with high explosives!

For himself, Strong felt no great concern; he could quite easily pile on speed to Bigbury, cross to the up line, and run out of harm's way; but it seemed that no earthly power could stop that death-laden runaway from crashing into Bigbury terminus and blowing a quarter of the town to rubbish-heaps. True, Bigbury's staff would be warned—were even warned already, perhaps—by the telephone-call of the first startled signalman who heard the unexpected trucks roar past his cabin; but what could they do? If they sent a gang to derail the runaway there would be much risk, for the populous district extended far into the country, following the course of the line, as railway towns often do.

These thoughts came in a flash; then came another, which held a thrill of hope.

"Noss sidings!" he shouted to the fireman. "We'll race 'em to Noss, shunt there, and let 'em pass, then follow and couple up—if we can. Are you game to take chances, old man?"

Lee nodded and grinned approvingly, as though the adventure just suggested was precisely to his taste.

No. 65 immediately had a severe shock, for Strong opened the throttle to the full on the descending grade. For a moment her driving-wheels skidded on the wet rails, refusing to "bite." Then she realised that something must be amiss, and put her back into it. For seven miles Strong kept up the pace; then the lights of Noss glimmered ahead, and Lee braked her down smartly (he was an artist with the brakes, was Lee), so that she stopped exactly opposite the stone cabin bearing the legend on a painted board, "Noss Signals West Box." From the window of that box leant an anxious signalman.

"Runaways behind," said Strong, looking up at the oblong of light.

"Yes, I know—they've spotted 'em two blocks back," replied the signalman. "What are you stopping here for? Get on quick—you haven't got five minutes to play with, man."

"Shunt me sharp on the loop, then I'll uncouple, let the lot run by, and chase 'em—catch 'em and hook 'em up. See? Look slippy, old chap."

"*Some* idea that!" said the signalman, with a gasp. For a few seconds he disappeared, and his huge shadow fell across the panes as he swung several levers over. Points clicked together somewhere in the murk.

"All clear!" he sang out. "Number two loop siding."

In another minute the train crept off the main line to the loop, and No. 65, disconnected, was taken close to the end of the loop where it rejoined the main farther on. Lee ran back to investigate, and returned to report twelve trucks missing. He climbed to the footplate and attended to the fire with exceptional care.

Fuming at the delay, No. 65 waited, an immense shadow against the gloomy night; her mettle was roused, and her pressure-gauge was indicating 220 lbs.—almost the blowing-off point. As Lee flung open the firebox door a brilliant cone of yellow light shot up to the lowering clouds; in the glare he looked like a study in black and gold—a grimy Vulcan labouring at his forge. He

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He . . . pulled himself by main force along to the smoke-box, and, crouching in the fluttering semi-vacuum formed by the last truck, leant down and groped for one of the hanging coupling-chains. [*Page* tc6, *col* 2]

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clanged back the door; the red glow vanished, and he became a shadow.

Through the impatient noises which No. 65 could not repress, the hissing of driven rain could be heard and the eerie whistle of the wind. In the darkness the two men waited, peering along the track. Suddenly both shouted together:

"They're coming!"

Above the other sounds rose a distinct rumble, which rapidly grew to a loud roar; as a tiny speck of light in the distance became larger. In another moment the dozen flying trucks went past with a noise like thunder, the two red tail-lamps converging as they raced off as though viewed through a diminishing-lens. Without a second's delay, Strong cautiously threw on half the steam (to jerk full steam on a standing engine simply means a furious whirr of the wheels and no "grip"), and No. 65 crossed gently to the Bigbury main line.

"Now then," muttered Strong, "we've got to travel!" And No. 65 had the fright of her life when, running light, every pound of steam she could carry was given her and the expansion-gear was set "all out." But she soon recovered, realising that the men on board both meant business. She was no dandy express flyer, built for speed and accustomed to whisk a train of exquisite luncheon-cars for hours on end at pretty well a mile a minute without a stop, but for the next half-hour she beat the summer records of many of the rakish green models, the pride of the Company and the pets of the loco boss, who hissed at her so scornfully in the sheds.

The thudding of her exhaust grew to a steady hum as she settled into the race of her career. To her crew it seemed that they were being hurled through a cavern of echoing shadows; landmarks could not be distinguished, and only by the character of the sounds they heard—the deafening roar as they shot through a tunnel, the clatter of a deep cutting, the hollow clamour as they rushed past some wayside station—could they judge where they were. Flattened by the wind, the plumes of steam drifted out behind them in a long, pale cloud.

The runaways were travelling faster than Strong had thought possible; urged by the tremendous momentum gained in that first mad descent, they were plunging on towards Bigbury at an appalling rate, and when at last he caught the glimmer of those two red tail-lamps for which his eyes had been straining, he gave a gasp of despair. It was a question whether they were not too late.

"Carry on," he said to his mate, "when we touch!"

Lee understood and nodded, watching with admiring glances between his frequent spells of firing how Strong handled the big locomotive as though she were a restive, highly-strung racehorse. Yard by yard, and at last it seemed inch by inch, No. 65 overhauled that flickering gleam until it was separated from her headlights by only a few feet. Strong, peering over the side while his left hand still grasped the regulator, gave her just enough steam to make contact with the buffers of the rear truck, and then a little more to keep closely touching—so that she was actually accelerating the speed of the runaways.

"Keep her so!" he sang out. And then he crept round the edge and disappeared from view.

Cruelly whipped by the wind of their flight, he gripped the hand-rail of the boiler, pulled himself by main force along to the smoke-box, and, crouching in the fluttering semi-vacuum formed by the last truck, leant down and groped for one of the hanging coupling-chains.

Tiny bits of sharp gravel from the ballast of the permanent-way whirled up and cut his face; it seemed that he would never find that heavy iron link, never be able to reach far enough to drop it over the opposite hook that looked so near in the glare of the engine's headlights; but he did it—and then tried the other, fearing that the coming sudden check might snap a single connection.

He almost gave it up; he was half-blind, dazed by the buffeting of the gale, the dizzy eddies of dust and pricking particles of stone; yet he held on pluckily, and, after two failures, managed to drop the second coupling securely over the second stout hook. The chains hung slackly, of course, but to attempt to screw them taut was out of the question—he was nearly exhausted.

On the footplate Lee, gazing forward anxiously, saw a hand flung up, heard a hoarse call. In an instant he shut off steam, and almost in the same moment began twisting the hand-brake of the tender—cautiously at first, to avoid dangerous jerking, then more energetically. He left it hard on, and immediately pushed over the little upright handle of the steam-brakes. Every wheel was gripped; No. 65 felt herself held as in a gently, but steadily-closing vice, and began to hold back the trucks for all she was worth as obediently as she had raced forward. Slowly—very slowly it seemed to Strong—the speed began to lessen.

Hardly able to see, his hands bruised and cut by rough blows, his face bleeding, he was creeping back to the footplate, wondering

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if he had been in time, half expecting a crash and a terrific explosion at any moment. He looked out; they were even now running through the suburbs of Bigbury—rather fast, too.

"Hard down and reverse!" he called. "Last chance!"

On went the powerful brakes to the full with a clench there was no mistaking; No. 65, disgusted, groaned and shrieked, and spat from her brake-blocks a shower of sparks, but she began to pull up. Then Lee, easing the brakes, did what no engineer ever does except in an emergency—reversed the gear and let on steam while still travelling forward. Skidding onward for many hundred yards, pulled by the trucks in front, the gallant engine at last stopped dead with a resentful moan just outside the sheds of Bigbury station.

Bigbury station had been "strategically evacuated," as the papers say, news of the approaching runaways having been passed on by half-a-dozen excited signalmen on the main route; but it was not long before distant watchers for the anticipated catastrophe hurried to the spot and peered up at the apparently deserted footplate. They saw nothing until one of them, the Bigbury locomotive superintendent, mounted the iron steps; then the fireman, on his knees, was discovered administering a draught of hot tea to the driver, who sat in a corner and smiled at him rather weakly.

"Boys, you've saved the town!" exclaimed the loco boss. His expert glance perceived immediately what they had done. "We should have been off the map if that lot had hit the station. Come down, come down! I'll send a fresh crew to see to your engine. My stars, but you must have shifted!"

In the locomotive superintendent's office Driver Strong and his mate had blissful rest and needed refreshment before being carried off to comfortable quarters for the night; and later on there was much talk of a little subscription among the townsfolk, considering that the V.C. or D.S.O. was not available for humble heroes of the railway. And into the sheds close by No. 65 slid softly, to be made a fuss of by all the engine-cleaners in the place, for in that night's race with death she had earned more fame than all the spick-and-span ladies of the home sheds had known in the whole of their swift and splendid careers put together.

PRISCILLA.

There's a scent of thyme and roses, and a breath of baking hay,
And a cheery "Gee! Get up there!" as the waggons move away;
There's a kindly sun a-smiling, and the larks are singing true,
And the cloudless sky above me is a deep, unsullied blue.
Yet, if I were but a poet, I could write a sweeter sonnet
On Priscilla's sunny curls inside a faded blue sun-bonnet.

She's the fairest flower of any in her simple gingham gown,
And I wouldn't change her roses for the lilies grown in town.
Oh! your London girls may chatter of the topics of the day,
But I hear a voice that's sweeter down in Glo'ster, raking hay.
And your noisy, bustling city, with the grime of smoke upon it,
Holds no treasure half so precious as a faded blue sun-bonnet!

I have heerd of girls, Priscilla, who are working on the land,
Dressed in strange, uncouth apparel you would scarcely understand;
For they stride about in breeches and an unbecoming hat,
And a manly belted tunic (not so very much of that!).
Oh! the costume has its uses, but, I pray you, never don it—
Keep your dainty gowns, Priscilla, and your captivating bonnet.

Anne Page.

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Would I Like to Live My Life Over Again?

By
HORATIO BOTTOMLEY
(*Editor of "John Bull"*).

Photo Dixon, Liverpool.

Mr. Horatio Bottomley, the author of the following powerful article

Mr. Bottomley says "Yes." What do you think? Does the idea of living your life over again appeal to you? Have you had any personal experiences which lead you to believe that you have lived before? Perhaps you have visited some place for the first time, and yet found it familiar, or met someone for the first time whom yet you seemed to know well. Most of us have had such experiences—I want to hear yours. I am offering a prize of £5 for the best contribution on this subject sent in by readers. Letters should be not longer than 250 words, and may deal with any aspect of the question that you choose. They should be addressed to the Editor, THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C. 2, and be marked "Life" in the top left-hand corner. All entries must reach this office by first post on Monday, June 25th.

WHO has not asked himself this question? (And, of course, as the lawyers say, "him" embraces "her," doesn't it?) But in almost every case the query is uttered in a tone of remorse and regret, implying the answer "How differently would I live it!" Which, when you think of it, is nonsense, for, obviously, unless we were reborn with different parents, with different natures, and different environment, we should live just exactly the same life over again! But I suppose the real soliloquy is: "How I would like to live my life over again—*with the knowledge of my past life thrown in*"—and that is a very different thing.

A Matter of Temperament.

Everyone of us would like that! It means that we should never make a mistake, never get into any trouble, never do any of the things which caused us worry and anxiety, and loss, in the old life. And, in that sense, I suppose most people *would* like to live their lives over again. So few of us really enjoy our troubles! But I am one who does, and if living my life all over again meant that I was always to find things going smoothly—no fighting and struggling and disappointments; no sadness and sorrow even—then I don't want to have another go! You see, it's all a matter of temperament—it depends upon what "star" you were born under. Yes, I confess I am unscientific enough to believe in astrology—the mother of astronomy.

As a matter of fact, the query, in one form or another, is one of the commonest of our proverbial questions. "Is life worth living?"

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we inquire, and, of course, we are familiar with the punning reply: "It all depends on the liver!" But usually, as I say, it presents itself in a more serious guise. "If only I could have my time over again!" sighs the middle-aged man or woman; and, no doubt most of them imagine that if they could have a new start, a second chance, they would do far better than in their first experimental stage of human experience. And so for a little while I want to discuss the matter, not too philosophically, but through the medium of thoughts and emotions which are common to the race.

Look for the Silver Lining!

Taking the question in a literal sense, personally I am inclined to answer with a stout affirmative; and, indeed, I go so far as to assert, or, at any rate, to register my opinion, that in the average human life, be it short or long, happiness outbalances misery, pleasure outweighs pain, joy transcends sorrow. In a sense, it may be true, as Shelley said, that "our sincerest laughter with some pain is fraught," but it is far more profoundly true that the most poignant sorrow is relieved by some touch of comfort, some gleam of hope.

What *is* sorrow but the food of the soul? Look back, my dear and startled reader, upon any great grief of your life, and tell me—do you not feel a thrill of divine happiness in contemplating it? Have you, for instance, lost a son, a husband, a father, a lover, or some other dear one in this war? Yes? Well, does not the contemplation of the sacrifice exalt your whole being and bring you nearer to God? Does not it fill you with a kindlier spirit towards your neighbour, and do not you find comfort in the knowledge that when the Great Audit comes you will be able to point proudly to that page in the book of your life?

The Flower of Remembrance.

The Cruel Reaper, as you thought him, came and tore your beloved away. How you wept; how empty became the whole world—but tell me again, hasn't the sacred memory of that sorrow been your most cherished possession in life? Remembrance is a flower which never dies when watered by the tears of Love. Oh, yes, do not let us lose the joy of our sorrows.

Let me tell you a little story. I was speaking, a few months ago, at a big meeting in the Midlands. It was all about the war, and I did my best to comfort those who had been bereaved. After the meeting a card was sent in to me in my private room at the hall. It bore the name of a local solicitor—not a very sentimental sort of person, think you?—and a request for a few minutes' conversation. He came in accompanied by the saddest-faced little lady I had ever seen, and both of them were in deep mourning.

"We wish to thank you for what you have said," he began. "We have lost our only boy—who was all in the world to us—and we have not slept, and have scarcely eaten a meal since we got the news ten days ago. To-night we shall go to sleep thanking God"—and if the light in both their eyes was not divine, I can give it no other name.

And, in the same way, I could quote hundreds of letters which have come to me couched in similar words. Here is one: "After reading your message to the Mothers of England I no longer mourn my dear son. I know now that I have simply lent him to God—and the thought makes me very happy."

And so, you see, my friend, that there *is* happiness in grief—joy in sorrow. And, thank God, I have had *my* share; *and I should like to live it all over again.*

The Joy of Combat.

This conviction may be a part of my notorious optimism; it is certainly an ingredient of my faith, and I am certain that, having drained the cup of life to the dregs, I should, if it were possible, call for a second draught of the priceless vintage. To "breast the blows of circumstance" is to taste the eternal joy of combat. Much depends, as I have said, upon individual constitution; but when I come across a man who, though immune from life's major ills, is constantly bemoaning his fate, proclaiming life a failure and the grave a boon, I am inclined to say, like Herbert Spencer to the young fellow who beat him at billiards: "Sir, this is sad evidence of a misspent youth."

With human pleasures, with "the wine of life," as with all other feasts, excess breeds surfeit and nausea. For myself, however, with a fairly wide experience of earth's legitimate joys, and here and there, perhaps, a bite of forbidden fruit, I pronounce the banquet "very good." I shall be loth to quit the board. I know I shall want to come back again. For, remember that at each succeeding stage of its upward evolution, human life will be more wonderful, more full of beauty and romance. Wouldn't it be grand to come back, say, in a century's time to see the full effulgence of glories now hovering on the brink of dawn? To the prophet and preacher, to the inventor, to the reformer, how precious a second lease of life would be wherein, in the wonderful phrase of Scripture, they might "see of the travail of their souls and be satisfied."

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A Second Lease of Life.

But there are some, no doubt, who will think this a profitless speculation. Their outlook is so different. They are not in love with life. Its chances and changes hold no charm for them. They are the folks of whom, in Mrs. Gummidge, Dickens gave us the immortal type—"lone, lorn creeturs," with whom "everything goes contrairy." It is undoubtedly true that there are human wayfarers whose footsteps are uncannily dogged by misfortune. Despite their utmost effort, nothing prospers. Baffled in business, crossed in love, cheated in health, they invite commiseration. In all likelihood these unhappy ones would return a sharp negative answer to the question we are discussing.

Clinging to Life.

Yet I doubt if even so they would be entirely sincere. Not that they would consciously deceive us; they are more likely to have been deceiving themselves. Life is sweeter to them than they know. It holds compensations they are apt to forget. Let a crisis occur; let the man be suddenly placed in a situation where, compatibly with honour, he may save his life or lose it, which course will he take—backward to safety or forward to destruction? Very few pessimists, I fancy, are potential suicides. And if the offer of a second life came, what would the answer be? I believe that if, in these high matters of Destiny, we were a self-governing race, a proposal to give each man and woman a second time on earth would be carried by overwhelming majorities. I think so. I may be wrong. But, of course, the whole idea is a fantasy, a mere play of the imagination. Is it? Are we sure? I am disposed to wonder whether in the "idle" question proposed, I have not stumbled against an eternal truth.

You have heard, have you not, of the theory of "reincarnation"—of the "reincarnation of souls?" It is an ancient Faith, or, if you will, a hoary superstition. It is at least as old as Pythagoras, who flourished somewhere about 600 B.C., and, do you know? I sometimes think that just as there are lost arts, mislaid and forgotten in the course of human evolution, so there are lost sciences; and that "theology"—like astrology—is one of them.

The Great Web of Destiny.

What if "reincarnation" is not a fad, but a fact? Suppose it is true that the life of a man, as we know it, is but a stage in the pilgrimage of his soul, and that some day he will come back again in another body to carry the process of spiritual evolution a stage further towards some glorious consummation, hidden as yet from our finite minds? What then? A fantastic theory, you think? Well, at any rate, having made up my mind that I should like to live again, I should like to live now as though it were possible. I hope never to treat a man so that I should be unable to look his son in the face, or a woman so that I should be ashamed in the pure presence of her daughter. I like to think that if ever I pass this way again I shall encounter none but decent memories of my former personality. And I hope that if ever I am "reincarnated" I shall return to this beloved England.

How good to come back, like Rip Van Winkle, to see the progress made while we have slept—to witness the glorious aftermath of present tragedies; perhaps to find the answer to questions now insoluble—at any rate, to get a little nearer to the heart of Life's transcendent mystery; to unravel a further strand or two in the great web of Destiny. Yes, if I could live again I should want to come back to Britain, to see her purified by suffering, ennobled by sacrifice, arrayed like a bride in the pure radiance of her golden glory. I wonder if it is possible. I wonder if the old Greek philosopher was right!

The Curse of Science.

Who shall say? I sometimes think that whilst modern science has taught us much, it has untaught us more. We know more about the physical material world—but less about the things Beyond. I once said that to my dear lost hero, Charles Bradlaugh. He smiled and replied: "You mean we know more about things which *are* and think less of things which are *not*." That is the curse of Science. No amount of radium will light the road to God. No X Rays will discover the human soul. Think of the name—the X Rays—the *Unknown* Rays. Well, perhaps Charles Bradlaugh knows to-day things of which his philosophy—oh, that word "philosophy"!—never dreamt.

And, perhaps, after all, we *shall* live our lives again!

Whether it will be the same, or a better, or a lower life, I believe depends upon how we live *this* one. I have already developed that idea, you may remember, in a previous article. Let me put it once again.

The Great Sea of Immortality.

My belief is that every human being is the repository of a quantity of Vital Force—probably refined electric fluid—which, at a certain stage in the development of the body, enters and vivifies it, and remains there.

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captive until what we call death. It is this wonderful mystic force which we call the soul, and at death it is liberated—to return, either purified or degraded (according to the nobility or otherwise of the character of its temporary prison) to "the great sea of Immortality which flows all round the world." Well, you may ask, what bearing has such a theory on our theme? Let me explain again.

The Doctrine of Reincarnation.

If a very pure and exalted life has been lived—a life of love and sacrifice and unselfishness—the impress of that life will be retained by the liberated soul to such an extent that it will not "mix" with the general volume of force, of which it is a part; it will remain intact, waiting for a new physical "affinity," for a new home. Equally, if its sojourn here has been in a depraved and decadent being, it may equally acquire a vicious character of its own, and likewise refuse to "blend," awaiting *its* chance to find another congenial abode. And thus, in a sense, you get the doctrine of reincarnation—the one soul "living" again in the body of some great and good man or woman and the other flying to a human degenerate, or, perhaps to something even lower than that; but that is another matter.

And thus, if I am right, you see that it is possible for each of us to "live again," even on this earth. And don't you think that some of us are really doing so? Has no one of you, on visiting some place for the first time, recognised it as something you are sure you have seen before? Have you never met someone, for the first time as you think, whom you seemed to know well, and between whom and yourself there has been an immediate affinity, a mutual attraction? Have you never "felt" the presence of someone in the room? Have you never been haunted by the same dream of some person or place unknown to you?

The Threshold of Mighty Discoveries.

Ah, well, it will all be clear to us some day. We are on the threshold of mighty discoveries, and perhaps this ghastly war is the prelude of their dawn. Armageddon! Tears and Blood; Fire and Sword; Suffering and Sacrifice—and then the Revelation—the awakening. How and when it will come no man can say. "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform"; and the war may be one of His methods—the test of the fitness of the men and women to "live again." How it is transforming all our old ideas!

Throwing off the Shackles.

Even the great Churches are throwing off the shackles of Convention which kept them out of touch with the common folk. "I believe," said an eminent Bishop not long ago, "that the soldier who scrambles over the parapet with an oath on his lips will be welcomed by God as a 'good and faithful servant.'" The old school would have consigned him to perdition. But the Bishop espouses my theory—that the heroic death of a fighter for the Right wipes all things off the slate.

And so, to sum up, I *would* like to live my own life over again. And so would you.

LOOK AFTER THE BABIES!

The baby of to-day is the citizen of to-morrow. Therefore it behoves us to look after the welfare of the nation's infant life to the very best of our ability. The first week in July is to be known as "National Baby Week," and a campaign will be launched for the express purpose of impressing the importance of the subject on the nation at large. In the July ROYAL, Mr. Bottomley will give the campaign his practical support in an article which everyone who has the supremacy of his country at heart, should read and ponder over.

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A MAN OF SPIRIT.

By William Merriam Rouse.

"I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul."

John Pyle opened his eyes, blinked, ran his fingers through his tousled grey hair, and promptly sat up in bed. He never had very much trouble about waking up, for the hard mattress on his rickety bed was not conducive to sleep after the actual demands of nature had been satisfied.

He swung his feet to the floor, and, by a series of quick, expert movements, exchanged his torn nightshirt for undergarments that had long been buttonless, then lacing up a pair of heavy boots, drew on a blue cotton shirt and adjusted a pair of corduroys.

In less than a minute after he had opened his eyes John was tiptoeing downstairs. Half-way to the lower floor a board squeaked. He stopped and held himself rigid as he listened. There was no sound through the house, and, with a heartfelt sigh of relief, he went on, putting each foot down with the utmost caution.

The kitchen was flooded with sunlight. John went to the sink, filled the wash-basin from the water-pail, and generously soused his hands, face, and hair with much grateful but subdued spluttering. He combed his hair, still thick except on top of his head, with particular attention, and even tried to induce the ends of his forlornly drooping grey moustache to take on a slight curl.

It was the first day of September, and to-morrow, barring death and accidents, he would go to the Springcourt Fair For more than twenty years an annual trip to the Springcourt Fair had been John Pyle's only holiday. To him other days had become more or less as stepping-stones along the path of time that led up to the second of September.

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Treading with marvellous lightness, John lit the fire and prepared his breakfast. Old Betsy, the aged and now useless house-cat, came purring out of a corner and rubbed against his legs. John let the toast burn as he stooped to stroke her arching back.

"Nice kitty! Poor kitty!" he whispered. "Want some milk?"

Betsy opened her mouth in a faint mew of acquiescence. John sighed and shook his head as he poured out some milk. Betsy must be put out of the way before long, now that she could not catch mice. He would have liked to keep her, and a dog, too, if things had been different.

After he had eaten his breakfast of toast and tea, and Betsy had polished her saucer, John washed up, and, walking through the house, opened the door of a spacious chamber that led out of the parlour. A woman whose black hair showed only faint and occasional streaks of grey lay sleeping in a broad and comfortable bed. Her face, resting on a firm white arm, showed few marks of time, even in the relaxation of sleep.

"Seven o'clock, Lottie!"

Lottie Pyle's eyelids lifted and unveiled two big, black orbs that snapped threateningly even before she had completely torn herself from the embrace of slumber.

"Fire's made an' kettle's a-bilin', Lottie!"

Mrs John Pyle was now thoroughly awake. She raised herself on an elbow and pointed a stern finger at her husband.

"You didn't forget to set that mouse-trap last night before you went to bed, did you?"

John squirmed and shifted from one foot to the other.

"Why—er—the trap's out there in the pantry, Lottie; you can see it fer yerself!"

He retreated abruptly, but the voice of his wife followed him.

"It's a mighty good thing for you that you did! It would have been jest like you to forget all about it, or to forget it on purpose because you know that if there's one thing in the world I can't abide it's a mouse!"

John tramped noisily through the kitchen to the outside door, turned quickly, and sped with catlike steps into the pantry. He took a wire mouse-trap of the cage variety from a nail, set it on the floor in a conspicuous place, and hurried out of doors. He threw back his bent shoulders and drew in a great breath of the crisp air.

Pyle's first step on the barn floor was greeted by little good-morning whinnies from Sam and Slim, his big bays. He stopped to visit the stall of each horse with a pat and a few words of general praise before he went about his duties. Nearly everything had been done when, as John lifted a particularly large forkful of hay, one of the buttons that held up the back of his corduroys flew off with a pop.

"Thunderation!" he exclaimed, and grabbed his loosened garment in the nick of time. Holding it up with one hand, for the other button was far from secure, he started for the house.

Lottie and Ted Cummins, the farm hand, had just sat down to breakfast. Coffee, coloured by rich cream, steamed in their cups. A dish of fried eggs, flanked by one of bacon and tomatoes, stood in the centre of the table. There were lesser appeals to the appetite in the form of toast and marmalade. John gazed wistfully but resignedly as he said:

"Where can I find a needle and thread, Lottie? Just busted a button off my corduroys."

A grin distended the well fed face of Ted Cummins as he saw that Pyle's garments were threatened with possible dissolution. But Lottie did not grin. She turned on her husband a countenance blazing with indignation.

"Done a fine job when you set that mouse-trap last night, didn't you? Expected to ketch mice without any cheese, I 'spose? I'll bet anythin' you never set it at all last night, but sneaked out an' put it down there on the floor this mornin' to fool me!"

John decided that it would save argument to own up at once.

Mrs. Pyle snorted.

"You know as well as I do that the mice have been runnin' round in the pantry fer a week, an' every time I see one it gives me the creeps! But I 'spose if I want to get anythin' done round here I've got to do it myself."

It was quite plain that Lottie was in one of her tantrums, apparently brought on by the mouse-trap incident. John knew that mice were his wife's pet aversion, in a collection of carefully nourished aversions, but it did seem that she was a little more violent than the occasion warranted.

His shoulders drooped as he went out and in the privacy of the barn inserted a nail in such a manner that it served for the lost button. He had already started milking when Ted, leisurely picking his teeth, appeared. The philosophy that had served John Pyle through many domestic squalls reasserted itself, and he greeted his farmhand with a pleasant smile.

"Goin' to have fair weather fer the fair, I believe," he said, cracking his annual joke.

"The weather's all right," replied Ted, with a peculiar emphasis on the word weather

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that stirred up a vague uneasiness in his employer's mind.

John went through the morning's work with a troubled spirit. There was a faint possibility that Lottie, left to herself, would get over her temper, but he knew that a sight of him would be more than likely to set her off again, and he dreaded the approach of dinner-time.

The Springcourt Fair offered a sort of first-aid to the situation, for he would be gone from early morning until late at night, and he thanked his lucky stars that the annual holiday came at such an opportune time. Lottie would have a chance to cool off.

Dinner-time came with the swift approach that dreaded events take to themselves.

The click of knives and forks and the noises incident to Ted Cummins' mastication were the only sounds that broke the silence of the dinner-table. When Ted kept still like that it was a sure sign of the very worst. John knew that Ted liked his easy berth and that he realised not even the necessity for having help would stay Mrs. Pyle's tongue in one of her extra special tempers. All the signs pointed to a big storm.

When, at the end of a busy day, John scraped his boots at the back door and went in to supper, a single look at the clouded face of his wife damped his spirits. She had never looked more thunderous or slammed dishes with greater vehemence. Knowing that he was hanging on the brink of a domestic volcano, he held his peace through the monosyllabic conversation of Mrs. Pyle and Ted until the meal came to an end. Then it seemed a good time to make overtures.

"Don't you want me to wash up to-night, Lottie?" he asked.

"Wash up!" she hurled back at him. "If you can't wash up any better than you kin set mouse-traps I don't want you messin' about in my kitchen! An' there's another thing I've told you to do more than forty times—that's get rid of that pesky old cat! She don't earn her salt! Between you an' the cat this house'll be overrun with mice, the dirty things! Go out to the barn where you belong an' stay there!"

"All right, Lottie," he agreed hastily. "If you'll jest lay out my clean shirt an' Sunday clo'es so I kin have 'em to go to the fair I won't bother you no more, an' I'll set that mouse-trap, sure as shootin'!"

Mrs. Pyle put down the stack of dishes she was carrying, faced her husband, and established her hands firmly on her hips. John involuntarily took a step backward. He had time to notice that Ted Cummins was grinning as he smoked in one corner of the kitchen, and his dislike for that young man fairly curdled. Then the storm broke.

"John Pyle," his wife ripped out her words, "you ain't goin' to the Springcourt Fair to-morrer or any other day! I've stood it for twenty years an' I ain't goin' to stand it no longer! Last year you went an' drank a glass of beer while you was gone—I smelt it, an' you was brazen-faced enough to admit it yerself! The time is past when you kin go gallivantin' off to the fair while I stay to home an' work my fingers to the bone!"

"Now, Lottie, don't I ask you to go along every year?" he argued.

"If you say 'Now, Lottie' to me again I'll knock yer head off!" She picked up the poker. "I don't want to go to yer miserable old fairs! I've got business to 'tend to home, an' that's where you're goin' to stay hereafter! Yer clean shirt is locked up, and so's yer money, in my trunk, an' yer Sunday clo'es is in my cupboard! You ain't goin' to get 'em, neither! An' what's more, if you don't set that mouse-trap an' kill that cat before you go to bed I'll never cook another meal fer you as long as I live! Put that in yer pipe an' smoke it!"

John slunk out of the back door. Even if he had not been too stunned to say anything there would have been nothing to say. It was a relief to get out into the open air and hide his chagrin and disappointment under cover of the gathering dusk.

Old Betsy appeared, purring, with her tail aloft and her back arched. He took her up and went into the barn. Sam and Slim whinnied. The friendliness of the animals was soothing, for they could sympathise if they did not understand. He sat down on an empty box with Betsy in his arms.

It seemed to John Pyle that the bottom had fallen out of everything, and that he had fallen with it into a dark abyss from which there was no escape. His one day of freedom after three hundred and sixty-four days of patient tolerance had meant everything to him; that one day of unrestrained action when he shouldered through crowds and spent his money as he chose meant the re-establishment of his philosophical calm for another year. He needed it.

For the first time in the twenty years that he had been married, John Pyle definitely distrusted the blessing of matrimony. He shivered.

Something was stirring deep in his soul—the same sort of something that had raged within him when he licked Bill Whalen, his rival for the hand of Lottie. More than a score of years had elapsed since the memorable fight that had been the talk of the village.

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"John Pyle," his wife ripped out her words, "you ain't going to the Springcourt Fair to-morrer, or any other day. . . . The time is past when you kin go gallivantin' off to the fair while I stay to home an' work my fingers to the bone!"

and in all that time John Pyle could not remember that he had been angry.

Of course, for a long while there had not been anything to get angry about. Lottie's black eyes had flashed with admiration instead of wrath in those days, and for many months after their wedding she had seemed even to stand slightly in awe of him.

In some subtle way a change in their relations came about. Little by little Lottie usurped the powers that he good-naturedly relinquished until there was a time when, with much scolding, she told him to make his sleeping-quarters in the cubby-hole at the head of the stairs.

The Pyles had ceased to be man and wife —they had become woman and husband. To-night, for the first time, John Pyle saw the situation in that light.

He shivered again, and gripped old Betsy so hard that she gave a squawk of outraged dignity, and fled to the other side of the barn. He got up and kicked the box on which he had been sitting. Betsy dashed into Sam's stall, and the horses snorted with excitement. John paid no attention to the animals.

He was mumbling over the words of an old adage that emotion had dragged up from the reservoir of his memory:

"A woman, a dog, and a walnut tree—
The more you beat them, the better they'll be."

Suddenly the back-door of the house slammed, and the irritatingly cheerful whistle of Ted Cummins approached through the gathering darkness. John stopped pacing to and fro and faced the entrance as Ted stepped into the barn. The young man was newly shaved and dressed in his best. He grinned complacently but awkwardly, owing to a high collar, as he thrust his hands into his pockets with a swagger.

"Mrs. Pyle said I might go to the fair to-morrer, so I'm going off to-night," he announced. "Want to send yer love to the fair grounds?"

"Fair — you — to-morrer!" stammered John.

So Cummins could go to the fair, could he? And John Pyle could stay at home and work! It was the spark needed to set off the magazine of Pyle's latest wrath. The accumulation of years blew up with an internal convulsion that sent red streaks shooting before his eyes and a current of anger tingling to every nerve.

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With a catlike leap he grabbed the younger man by the throat and shook him as old Betsy would have shaken a rat in her palmiest days. He saw terror chase amazement out of Ted Cummins' face, and was satisfied. He gripped Ted by the shoulders, spun him round, and lifted him clear of the barn-door with a carefully-placed kick.

"Go on to the Springcourt Fair!" called John in a clear but restrained voice. "An' don't come back till you've learnt how to treat yer betters!"

It had grown quite dark before Pyle, chin up, shoulders back, and with a strange, new feeling of buoyancy in his heart, started for the house. Lights were out and all was quiet. He took the precaution of removing his heavy boots before he went into the pantry.

Smiling to himself, he cut a titbit of cheese, baited the mouse-trap, and then made a trip to the store cupboard. When he came out he had a bottle of Lottie's choicest cherries in his hand. He ate what he wanted, left the bottle open in the pantry, and climbed up to bed with a springing step.

John Pyle awoke while it was still night at the head of the stairs and dressed briskly in the dark. Cheerful sunlight greeted him when he stepped into the kitchen, carrying his shoes in his hand, and he paused to dance noiselessly a few steps of a long-forgotten jig before he began the spluttering morning rites.

It was half an-hour before he finished his tonsorial labours and went into the pantry.

Four mice squeaked and tumbled over each other in the cage, so badly terror-smitten that they had neglected to eat all of the cheese. Pyle carried the trap into the kitchen, and smiled grimly as he sat down to lace up his shoes. Looking like anything but a man who could be trifled with, he picked up the trap and stalked through the house. He halted in the doorway of his wife's room.

"Wake up, there!"

Mrs. Pyle sat bolt upright and her eyes popped open. She stared with uncomprehending gaze.

"Get up!" commanded John.

"What d'ye mean, John Pyle, talkin' to me like that?" There was an ominous self-repression in her neglect of epithet.

"Get up an' give me my clo'es an' what money there is in the house!"

"Jest wait till I get out of bed, John Pyle, an' I'll learn you how to talk to me!"

She gathered herself to spring out of bed. John slowly and dramatically raised the hand that held the mouse-trap. He walked towards the bed with measured steps and held the four squeaking prisoners out towards his wife. She recoiled.

"See them mice?" he demanded.

Mrs. Pyle looked from the trap to her husband's face, but she did not answer.

"Them mice is goin' to get you up," he announced, "an' they're goin' to get me my clo'es an' money an' some breakfast—a good breakfast, too!"

He moved the trap an inch nearer his wife's nose.

"Take them nasty things right out of here this minute!" she screamed.

John smiled and shook up his captives. They responded as one mouse. Mrs. Pyle shrieked, shut her eyes, and struck wildly at the trap.

"You miserable——"

"One!"

Pyle's finger moved slightly and a wriggling grey form dropped to the bed. With a piercing yell Mrs. Pyle scrambled out of bed, bounded across the room, and climbed on to a chair. The mouse, equally terrified, jumped to the floor and stopped uncertainly, looking from one to the other of the human beings.

"Skeedaddle!" barked John, stamping his foot. The mouse started towards Mrs. Pyle, and, completely upset by her screams, bumped his head blindly against a leg of the chair on which she danced a hysterical jig.

"Take it away!" she pleaded. "Oh, John, take it away!"

John, permitting no sign of inward relenting to show in his face, shooed the animal out of the room.

"Now," he said, ostentatiously swinging his trapful of mice, "get them clo'es an' that money!"

Mrs. Pyle climbed down and, with an occasional sniffle, dug into her cupboard and trunk. Her husband pocketed the money and laid the clothes over one arm.

"I want some breakfast soon as you get dressed," he remarked as he turned to go out, "an' don't be too long about it, neither!"

John hid his mice under the back steps for possible further reference, did a few jobs, and hurriedly changed his clothes in the kitchen. He had just finished lighting the fire when Lottie came out.

She began to bustle from pantry to kitchen almost cheerfully, it seemed to her husband, and once he was astonished to catch her looking at him with an unmistakable smile in her eyes. He was still pondering what revenge she might have secretly in mind when she called him to the best meal he had eaten since the early days of their married life.

Not a word was spoken until the end of the meal. Then John settled back in his

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chair with a sigh of such content as his inner regions had not known for years.

"That was a rattlin' good breakfast, Lottie," he said.

His wife actually blushed and looked down at her plate.

"I'm glad you liked it, John," she replied.

There was a moment of rather awkward silence. John got up and put on his hat.

"Think I'll be gettin' along to the station."

Suddenly he found himself looking into Lottie's eyes. She seemed to be nearer to him without having moved.

"I hope you'll have a good time, John. I like a man with some spirit. I always did, you know."

The next instant Lottie was in his arms, her head was on his shoulder, and he was patting her back with well-intentioned thumps from his horny fist.

The clock had ticked many times when there came a hesitating knock at the door. John and Lottie sprang apart. The round face of Ted Cummins appeared there. For a moment he hesitated.

"Have you got over being angry, Mr. Pyle?" he asked humbly. "'Cause if you have I thought I'd stay at home an' work to-day 'stead of goin' to the fair. There's plenty to do."

"Come in an' get your breakfast, Ted. We'll plan out the work to-night when I come home from the fair. I've got to hurry to catch the train now."

As Cummins entered John went out. Lottie followed him to the steps, and he turned and smiled back at her. A dozen paces up the road he turned round again. Lottie was still watching him, waving her hand. John swung his hat and went on, his eyes on the dusty road.

The old adage rang in his ears—he had proved the truth of it that morning. Already Lottie was a different woman.

"Don't women beat all!" he muttered to himself.

He gripped Ted by the shoulders, spun him round, and lifted him clear of the barn-door with a carefully-placed kick. "Go on to the Springcourt Fair!" called John.

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PICTURE PARAGRAPHS

The Editor will be Pleased to Purchase Photographs of an Interesting and Out-of-the-Way Nature. All Photographs should be Accompanied by a Short Description.

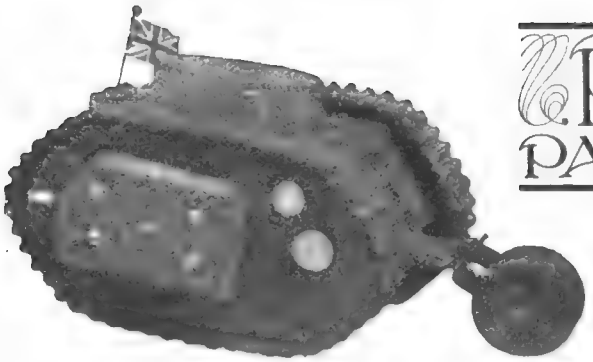


Photo *A. M. Nadin.*

This model "Tank" is in reality a smoker's companion, the central section being made to hold a tin of tobacco. A chocolate box forms the two sides, and pencils inserted in match-boxes serve as guns.

A MODEL "TANK."

THE "Tanks," those strange, uncanny monsters that are playing such an important part in the present war, have been objects of great interest and speculation ever since the eventful day on which they made their first appearance on the battlefield.

The two sides of the model, which is used as a smoker's companion, are formed by means of a chocolate box, hexagonal in shape, to which are affixed driving-bands of corrugated cardboard. Metal-pointed pencils masquerade as guns at the bow and on each side of the "Tank;" these are inserted in match-boxes, while the wheel is composed of a large pill-box.

The model is painted grey, relieved by touches of aluminium.

NOT A SNAKE.

AFTER a hasty glance, one receives the impression that this scantily-clad young gentleman is in the clutches of a deadly snake, but on closer inspection the idea is at once dismissed, for in such trying circumstances no one, not even the most optimistic of optimists, would regard what was left of his life with such a beaming countenance!

Photo *A. W. Cutler.*

This is not a snake, but the inner tube of a bicycle, which has been commandeered by the youthful bather to serve as a "float."

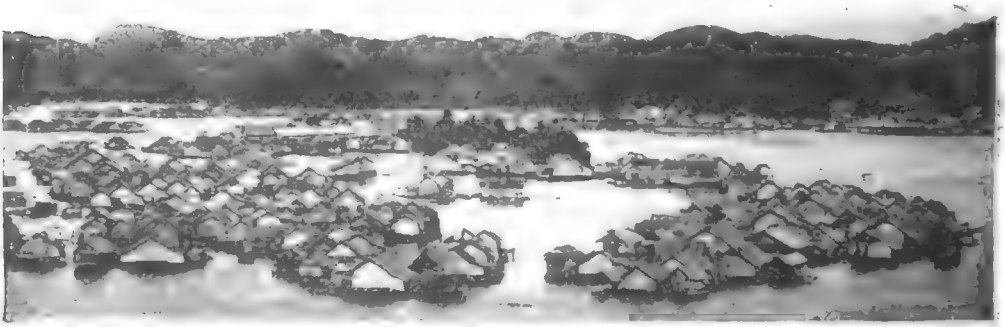
The "reptile" in this instance is nothing more formidable than an old inner tube of a bicycle. No longer of use for service on the road, the tube has been requisitioned by its present owner for use as a "float," a purpose which it answers admirably, thereby bringing to the heart of its proud possessor much joy and an overwhelming sense of superiority over all other youthful bathers in the near neighbourhood.

A QUAINT METHOD OF BUILDING.

BRUNEI is a British Protectorate in North-West Borneo, between British North Borneo and Sarawak.

To live in a native village in this part of the world must have something of the charm of living on a houseboat, for the native builders break away from all ordinary and commonplace methods, and strike out on a line entirely their own.

These "desirable family residences" are erected on stakes which are driven into the sea, and at first glance the village looks as though it had recently suffered a particularly severe flood.



A native village in Brunei, a British Protectorate in N.W. Borneo. The houses are built on stakes driven into the sea.

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Photo A. W. Cutler.

The steps and door of the old mint at Shrewsbury, which dates from the time when England was divided into Principalities, and each Principality had its own mint.

A RELIC OF THE PAST.

It is difficult to believe that this extremely unpretentious-looking doorway was ever the entrance to such an important building as a mint, but strange as it seems, this is—or was—the case.

In the days when this country was divided into Principalities, each Principality was the proud possessor of a mint of its very own, and these steps and the door belonged to the mint at Shrewsbury.

The old coppers which were used for heating the metal are still to be seen, and this relic of the past is of considerable interest to strangers visiting the town.

JACK FROST AT WORK.

This mysterious-looking object is not a freak mushroom, neither is it a new variety of stool. It is nothing more nor less than a frozen fountain, which in its normal state disports itself in the garden of a house at Ipswich.

During the Arctic spell suffered by dwellers in this land in January, the fountain was unable to resist the example set by probably all other water of its acquaintance, and froze hard. The end of the water-pipe froze gradually while the water was running, and as the water overflowed the basin it was transformed into long and slender icicles which hung picturesquely around the fountain.

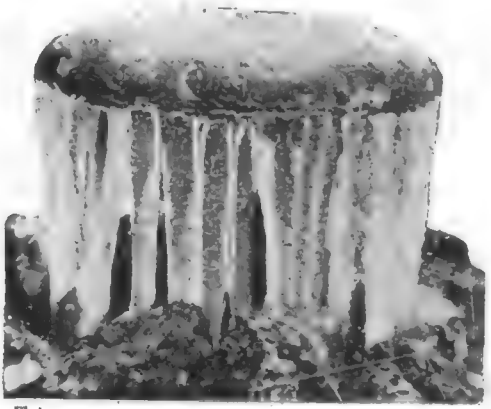

Photo S. A. Brown.

A frozen fountain last winter at Ipswich. The water froze as it overflowed the basin, and formed long icicles.

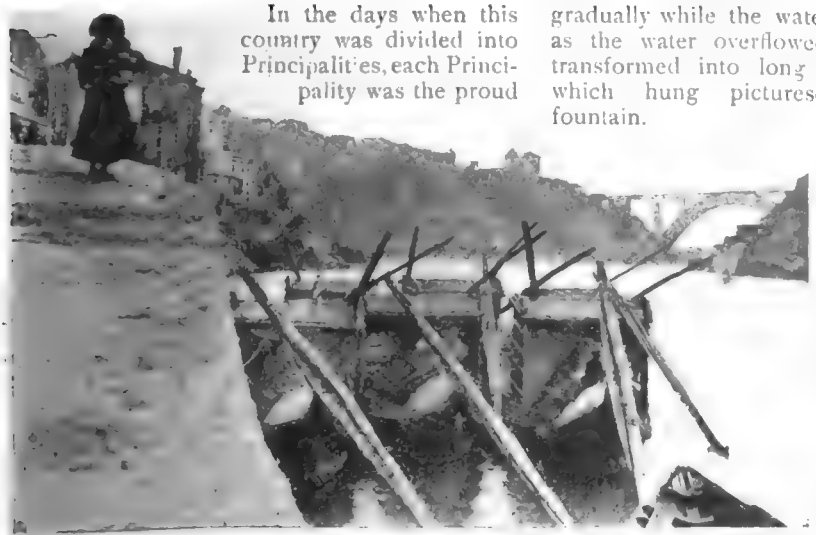

Photo A. W. Cutler.

Port wine boats on the Douro at Oporto, Portugal. The man in charge stands on the roof of the dwelling in the stern, and controls the boat by means of the wooden pegs at the top of the long oars.

THE PORT WINE BOATS.

The port wine boats, with their huge rudders, are one of the sights of Oporto, in Portugal. The men in charge of these boats stand on the roofs of the dwellings seen in the stern, grasping the wooden pegs at the top of the long oars, by means of which the boats are controlled.

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FOR THE SAKE OF DRAMATIC EFFECT

By Gwen Nisbet.

"All that a man may pray
Have I not prayed to thee?
What were praise left to say
Has not been said by me,
O, ma mie?"

I.

There are few men in whom the dramatic instinct is so strongly developed that it can be held responsible for altering the course of Destiny.

William St. John Macarthy was one of these few.

He was a subaltern in a native infantry regiment quartered at Deerapore, a hill-station in India.

He was also President of the Deerapore Dramatic Society. Women said that he was fascinating, and, personally, although I rarely admitted these things, I will confess that the upright carriage of the boyish, soldierly young figure, and the straight gaze of his exceedingly British blue eyes were attractive. But that is neither here nor there.

There was a girl, of course.

She came out from home—straight from school, they said, although goodness knows where she learnt all the distracting ways which instantly and permanently endeared her to the heart of every man, old or young, in the station. I do not know of any girls' school where such things are taught. Nevertheless, this particular girl had learnt them.

She had none of the awkwardness of the schoolgirl, yet she retained all the fresh, dewy bloom of the *ingénue*.

She was not an *ingénue*. In India you are either a child or a woman. You know nothing, or the world is an open book before you. There is no middle course open to a girl whose feet are set in the ballrooms of an Indian hill-station. They tell you all Anglo-Indian children are precocious. It is true. This child, with her bloom and her eyelashes and her girl's impulsiveness and her sense of humour, was a woman grown. She was nearly eighteen. She might have been fifty —or fifteen.

I expect you know that type of the irresistible. She was slight, with slender little wrists and ankles, and her ways were ways of pleasantness. Nevertheless, she could be excessively haughty when the mood took her. For she was a creature of moods and very feminine withal. Her eyes were big and golden-brown, with long, dark lashes, and her complexion was wild-rose. Her mouth was small and innocent-looking, like a child's, and, like a child's, it had innumerable tiny indentations, too small to be called dimples, at the corners, which broke into play when she smiled. She had several ways of smiling—a sad little smile and a sweet little smile and the most roguish smile in the world. Her nose was just the least bit tip-tilted. Misguided subalterns wrote odes to that nose. It was a dear little nose.

Her name, we will say, was Fleurette. It was not her real name, but that, unfortunately, I am not at liberty to disclose to you. It suited her quite as well as Fleurette, which, in itself, interprets her to perfection. It is regrettable to note that her flirtations formed the inter-season gossip of the station.

All this time nothing has been said about William St. John Macarthy, President of the Deerapore Dramatic Society.

He, in a manner of speaking, had been sitting on the fence. That is to say, he paid Fleurette none of those little attentions to which she was invariably accustomed, nor did he pour out the life-blood of his youthful heart at her dainty shrine. In short, if such a thing could be said of any man who knew Fleurette, he did not appear to notice her.

This in itself partook of the nature of the dramatic. I have told you that effect was as the breath of life to this otherwise perfectly normal scion of the British race.

For some time Fleurette, who had her hands full with other love affairs, did not notice this curious and unusual state of things. She was a busy little lady, and had

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you asked her opinion on flirting she would have told you that she had no time for such considerations.

This was perfectly true. She was so busy doing that she had no time for thinking. The defection of one subaltern more or less troubled her not at all. In fact, she barely noticed William St. John. He came not within the range of her immediate vision, and beyond the vague knowledge of his existence, he and his concerns never entered her head. She went about her usual distractions placidly, riding with one adorer in the morning, golfing with another in the late afternoon, and dividing her dances between half-a-dozen others at the Club in the cool of the evening.

William St. John sat on his fence and said nothing, with intense dramatic effect. It was a matter of speculation in the station as to how long it would take him to capitulate. Toilers in the plains, snatching a brief respite at Deerapore, clapped him knowingly on the back and cried: "Well, old chap, I s'pose next time we come up you won't be available for bridge in the evenings, eh?"

William St. John said nothing. He had always an eye for dramatic effect.

He drilled his Goorkhas on early parade; superintended their trench-digging, clad in khaki shorts, during the stifling hours round about the sultry noontide; played rugger for the regiment or polo on the *maidan* in the evenings, and had his bath and changed at the Club at six o'clock precisely. After that he played bridge till eight with two of his captains and a major man from some cavalry regiment, who was up on sick-leave. Sometimes he went into the ballroom and danced to the strains of his own regimental band. He danced very well and he was a charming partner. But he never craved a dance of Fleurette, whose programme nevertheless was filled to overflowing on every occasion.

About this time William St. John began to get up some theatricals in preparation for the hot-weather "week" of gaiety. Five of his friends from various parts of India came up to Deerapore to take part in the play, which was called *The Woman Who Said She Hadn't.* Their names were Tommy Waring, James Travers, George Drury, Bobby Adair, and Massingham, who was known as "the Nut" because he was always arrayed to perfection.

I was fond of Massingham myself, but of course, no other girl had a chance beside Fleurette. Not that Fleurette appropriated people's people unfairly. Women loved her as a general rule, and she always played the game. It wasn't her fault when men gravitated towards her as needles to a magnet. It was just that she was adorable.

Until she came I had allowed Massingham to carry my opera cloak and dance attendance on me because he was the best athlete in Deerapore, and I had a *flair* for athletic men at that time, but the first time he came up, after Fleurette's advent, I saw I should have to exert myself if I wanted to keep him, and even in Deerapore it's too hot to exert yourself in April. So I said: "Go along, do," or words to that effect to Massingham, and he went.

I was being amused by Dick Vereker of the Sappers just then, or I might not have relinquished Massingham so easily. Dick had a jealous temperament, and as I was about to get engaged to him—it was just before his thirteenth proposal—I didn't really need Massingham just then. So I handed him on to Fleurette without a murmur. She had her hands full at the time—as usual—but she is very sympathetic, and never reproached me. She knew I was in the transition stage at the time.

There were a lot of girls undergoing that painful transformation just at that time in Deerapore. It starts when you begin to wonder whether being a butterfly is quite the most glorious thing in the world, as you had always thought it before. The doubt arises when you find yourself spending more time than a butterfly should in the society of some particular man, and then he goes away back to work in the plains. Everyone has to do this in India, and Dick Vereker's leave was up in a week.

I was unsettled myself at that time and I used to talk to Fleurette about it in the evenings at the Club. She was my best friend. She was very sweet and sympathetic about it, because she has in the largest measure of any woman I know that divine gift called sympathy. It is sometimes called quickness of understanding. It was one of the reasons why every man in the place worshipped her. Flirt she might be, coquette she was to her finger-tips, but deep down within her I believed that hidden heart of her to be of gold—and of no inferior quality either. She spread romance over life and believed in it utterly. As I said, she was very sweet about it. But she was Fleurette, and she was not going through the uncomfortable transition stage herself. So she couldn't understand.

Of course, when William St. John arranged with his friends Tommy Waring, James Travers, George Drury, Bobby Adair, and Massingham (known as "the Nut") that they should all contrive to get furlough at the same time, and come up to take part in the hot-weather theatricals, it was an understood thing between them that rehearsals should fill

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in the evenings previous to the production of *The Woman Who Said She Hadn't.*

William St. John was an exceptionally talented actor himself, and he had the interests of the Deerapore Dramatic Society very much at heart. The play was well-written, but, being translated from the French, it required a sympathetic interpretation to make it go with the necessary swing. The actors would have to put in all their spare time rehearsing.

I am perfectly convinced that all five men came up to Deerapore with that fixed and heroic intention. I know for a fact that William St. John entertained the notion firmly. He made one little mistake only.

He reckoned without Fleurette.

Fleurette had not been asked by William St. John to take part in *The Woman Who Said She Hadn't*, though everyone felt that the title *rôle* had simply been created for her. She acted splendidly when once over the difficulty of nervousness, which was part of her quick temperament. However, William St. John, following, I conclude, his campaign of dramatic effect, did not invite her to join the cast.

He made a great mistake.

Fleurette was thus left with nothing to do in the evenings except dance. It followed that she could not dance without partners. And all the eligible dancing men had been pressed into service for *The Woman who Said She Hadn't.*

Tommy Waring, James Travers, George Drury, Bobby Adair, and Massingham (known as "the Nut") duly arrived at Deerapore, very hot and dusty and dry after the journey in the stifling heat in a very hot carriage from the plains. They arrived simultaneously—all except Massingham, who was in the Military Police, and could not get away till a week later. William St. John met them at the station, and they all drove away in *ticcagharris*, which is the vernacular for four-wheelers. William St. John wore a beaming countenance.

His friends, when

William St. John entered the orchid-house one night . . . just at the moment selected by Tommy Waring to propose—

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they had bathed at the Club and made themselves presentable, revealed themselves as good-looking youths with charming manners, of the type that one meets anywhere in the East, but hardly ever at home. They were all tall, and graduated from fair to dark, with little military moustaches, magnificent shoulders, and the same straight way of looking you in the eyes that first attracted you to William St. John Macarthy. They were athletes and gentlemen, and differed in no respect appreciably from each other. Also they were exceedingly youthful.

Fleurette was sitting watching the polo with an adorer on either side when they appeared. One held up her frilly silk sunshade to keep the sun out of her golden eyes. She had on a big, drooping hat that made her eyes seem shadowed and full of mystery.

She bowed to William St. John, and shot one golden glance at his companions.

William St. John saluted her — he wore no hat — and frowned. He turned hastily away, but——

Fleurette shot one more golden glance at his companions. Then she smiled — once. Then she looked away again. Her lashes were very long and curly.

William St. John frowned sternly. The young officers urged him forward. To his

——Fleurette did not mind much, but Tommy Waring jumped as if he had been shot. He did not, however, take his arms away from Fleurette.
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surprise, and very unwillingly, William St. John found himself introducing his companions to Fleurette.

After the lapse of half-an-hour he suggested rehearsal in a loud voice.

With one accord the infatuated young men turned pained glances upon their colleague. They all felt too done up, don't you know, to rehearse just yet. Perhaps presently—they murmured vaguely.

There was no rehearsal that night.

Fleurette danced all the evening.

Tommy Waring, James Travers, George Drury, and Bobby Adair danced also. They appeared to have recovered from their fatigue.

II.

A week later William St. John alternated between utter despair and fits of rage awful to behold. Tommy Waring, James Travers, George Drury, and Bobby Adair had attended, variously, exactly one rehearsal each. The play seemed doomed.

Then it was that William St. John Macarthy swore within himself a great and terrible secret oath, the while Fleurette continued to dance, and to twist her adorers round her little finger.

William St. John entered the orchid-house one night—he *said* it was by mistake, but as Fleurette said afterwards, what possible mistake could lead a man into the orchid-house after dark alone?—just at the moment selected by Tommy Waring to propose. The way men propose in India is they kiss you first and then ask you to marry them. In England, of course, it is the other way about. Tommy Waring had just got Fleurette in his arms when William St. John entered. (There was a bright moon.) Fleurette did not mind much, but Tommy Waring jumped as if he had been shot. He did not, however, take his arms away from Fleurette. William St. John looked once at him, muttered an apology, and left.

Fleurette evidently refused Tommy Waring, for he did not speak to William St. John again, but merely glowered at him from a distance when they happened to meet each other at the Club in the evenings. He attended rehearsals gloomily, however. His acting achieved nothing like its usual form.

The next night James Travers picked up a long white glove that had evidently been dropped by Fleurette. The perfume of violets lingered about it. Travers gazed at it in a depressed sort of way, and, evidently thinking he was alone, carried it passionately to his lips. Then he looked up and saw William St. John watching him with a cold smile. James Travers scowled at William St. John, dropped the glove hastily, and went in search of Fleurette. I think he proposed. Fleurette was annoyed with him for losing her glove. She sent him back to look for it, and it was not there.

James Travers suspected that William St. John had confiscated the glove, but he said nothing. He scowled at William St. John when they met next day at rehearsal, but he attended regularly after that.

A few nights later George Drury persuaded Fleurette to desert the ballroom with him to go and dance beneath the bright moonbeams on the smooth stone floor of the polo-shed. The band and the waltz it was playing could easily be heard from the polo-shed. They may have danced, but, knowing Fleurette and George Drury, I do not consider it likely. It was very dark in the polo-shed, and presently William St. John rose quietly out of the shadows, coughed politely, and went away,

Fleurette would not speak to George Drury ever again after that. He attended rehearsals with the zeal of a convert, and he was always assiduously polite to William St. John, but his gaze when it rested upon his quondam friend was vaguely reminiscent of glaciers. There was a species of bored indifference about it that was quite foreign to George Drury's jovial nature. Nevertheless, he attended rehearsals, and William St. John smiled. Then he thought of how he was losing his friends on account of Fleurette, and he frowned. However, he counted all things lost in a good cause that were sacrificed to dramatic effect. And undoubtedly the play was picking up.

Shortly afterwards Bobby Adair gave a moonlight riding picnic for Fleurette. He had arranged it very successfully, and it was easy to see that he intended to come back an engaged man. Fleurette herself was undecided. She was not in the least in love with him, for she was not one of those who mistake a passing infatuation for the Real Thing; but she felt that the *grand passion* for which she longed would probably never come her way, since it had not already done so. And Bobby was certainly an attractive youth. Moreover, he worshipped Fleurette, as was patent for all to see. Altogether I rather put my money on Adair, but I reckoned without William St. John.

He was also invited to the picnic, and he rode immediately in front of Bobby and Fleurette all the way.

If you have ever been to a moonlight riding picnic in India you will understand how heinous an offence was this. The dust he kicked up nearly blinded the couple behind him. It was in the hot weather just

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before the rains broke. Fleurette was very annoyed, indeed. Her eyes were bunged up with dust, and her throat was full of it. William St. John kept on apologising, and saying he was infernally sorry, but he rode all the way three paces ahead of them.

Adair's face was like a thunder cloud. He proposed to Fleurette as they were riding back, and she refused him petulantly, saying she wished she had never come to his horrid old picnic, and she sincerely trusted he would never ask her to ride with him again. Of course, this was rather hard on Adair, whose fault it certainly was not. Fleurette, however, said he ought to have made his arrangements better, and since she was covered with dust and almost choked with it, I think there was some excuse for her. She then left him, and rode back with Dick Vereker and me.

I felt angry with William St. John, but my anger was nothing compared with that of Bobby Adair. He said at first that he was blanked if he'd attend another rehearsal, but the others persuaded him, and because he was a sportsman he did not let them down. But he looked over the head of William St. John whenever they met

Massingham came up to Deerapore shortly after things had more or less settled down, and it was then too late for him to learn the part that had been allotted to him, which had therefore been passed on to somebody else. Fleurette took Massingham in hand, and they rode, golfed, and danced together for ten days.

I did not altogether wonder at Fleurette. Massingham did not belie his name of "the Nut." He was thirty-four, eminently attractive, with the ease and perfect manners of a man of the world, and that knowledge of women which either makes or mars a man of his type. It made Massingham. I mean by this that he had reached the age and understanding whereby he was able to divine their wishes and to plan for their comfort—really the greatest asset of all in a woman's eyes—and he made it appear to Fleurette that the earth, in his opinion, was merely a footstool for her so little feet. The station was expecting the news of their engagement every day now. But they reckoned still without William St. John Macarthy, his terrible secret oath, and his extraordinary eye for dramatic effect.

The Woman Who Said She Hadn't had passed off very fairly successfully, and Tommy Waring, James Travers, George Drury, and Bobby Adair, having all left Deerapore and returned to their respective regiments, were scattered to the four winds over the various provinces. Massingham alone remained in Deerapore with the field in his possession. He bore himself with the easy yet triumphant grace of a conqueror who has nothing to fear.

I suppose it was a delicious sense of his own power that made him linger during those glowing days before actually sealing his possession with the ring of compact. Anyway, he and Fleurette dallied like two children who are loth to leave the golden fields of youth to tread the stony highway of Life together. And while they lingered the unexpected happened.

William St. John Macarthy entered the field.

At first the station could hardly believe its eyes when it saw William St. John humbly begging dances from Fleurette of the golden eyes—and what was more, obtaining them. When it saw them sitting out together the station gasped, and when Fleurette appeared at dances with William St. John in adoring attendance, bearing her cloak and wraps, the station's eyes nearly fell out of its head with astonishment. William St. John said nothing about his sudden change of front to anyone. Inwardly he may have smiled; he had always an eye for dramatic effect.

Dick Vereker had left Deerapore, and Massingham came to me for consolation. He could not complain, for Fleurette treated him as kindly as ever, and shared her rides, golfing expeditions, and dances between him and William St. John equally. No one could tell that there was a hair's breadth to choose between them. Nevertheless, Massingham felt he had a grievance in that he no longer held undisputed possession of the field.

Well, the end was in sight. Personally, I never could reconcile William St. John's behaviour over this one extraordinary incident with his own honest and attractive nature. They say all men are mad when they are in love. But that is no excuse for a move like the one he next made. He said afterwards, miserably, that he was crazed. At the time I can only say that he appeared in complete possession of all his extremely acute senses.

There was a dance at the Club one night. Fleurette looked—oh, well, I daresay if you have ever seen anyone like Fleurette of the golden eyes you will know that no words could describe her as she appeared in those glowing days at Deerapore before the war. I saw the eyes of William St. John light up as the eyes of men light up for only one woman in a lifetime, and I knew that to-night would see the end of the contest between him and Massingham.

Dick Vereker got leave and came up for the dance, and so I did not have much time to watch Fleurette, but I caught a glimpse of Massingham's face as he passed us in the

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intricate mazes of the latest waltz, and it was not good to see. I was very happy myself, but I felt a little heartache hidden deep away down for Massingham, of whom I had been fond before Dick Vereker came up to Deerapore and taught me the difference between being fond and being—but that is beside the point. And then I saw nothing more of him all the evening.

Late that night, as Dick Vereker wrapped me up in my lace shawls and cloak, Fleurette came up the Club steps that led from the moonlit *maidan* on the arm of William St. John and whispered in my ear. Her face was radiant, but I know of no words to describe the look on the face of William St. John. So I imagine must a man look for whom the gates of Heaven have opened, and shown him no mere dream or lost illusion, but the attainment of his soul's desire. What Fleurette whispered to me was the news of her engagement, adding that it was not to be given out until the morrow. Then she blushed and looked shy. Fleurette shy! I knew she had passed through her transition stage in the twinkling of an eye, and emerged transformed.

I had no time for anything but bare congratulations at the time, for Dick Vereker swept me away, saying it was nearly four o'clock in the morning and he was going to take me home to get some rest and sleep.

The next night when I arrived at the Club I expected to find it buzzing with the news of the station belle's engagement. But I had reckoned without William St. John and his unerring eye for dramatic effect.

Instead of a sense of pleasurable excitement there was that atmosphere of flatness which invariably succeeds a time of unmitigated gaiety and amusement. People were lounging about, yawning openly, or playing bridge in a subdued manner, or snapping peevishly at each other over the illustrated papers the boy had brought in. Of Fleurette there was no sign. I inquired for William St. John and was told that he had gone away to the Northern Provinces, his leave being long overdue.

William St. John Macarthy on leave!

I called up my trap again and drove round in all haste to the house of Fleurette's mother. Probably she was not at home, but as the *syce* turned the pony up the moonlit drive that led to the house I was arrested by a perfect storm of tempestuous melody, which seemed to sweep out to me from the darkness beyond. Within the dimly-lit bungalow somebody was playing passionately.

Presently the sound ceased with an abruptness that made itself felt. There was a brief silence—a silence that somehow made my heart beat with an odd apprehension. I pushed aside the curtain of hanging beads that covered the doorway and entered the room.

Fleurette sat at the piano, her hands still upon the keys. Her face was quite composed, but—

My questions and expostulations died on my lips. Very calmly Fleurette rose and quietly handed me a letter. It was from William St. John, and was a perfect triumph of dramatic effect:

FLEURETTE,

My playtime is over, and I think I have in some measure paid the score of Tommy Waring, James Travers, George Drury, and Bobby Adair—and also that of many others, my dearest pals, with whom you saw fit to amuse yourself while it suited you, and tossed aside when you had broken their hearts I never cared a rap for myself, but I determined to do what I have done just to show you what it feels like to break your heart over a human being who cares not a snap of the fingers what becomes of you. I think I should also tell you that I am going to be married shortly.

So farewell, and perhaps some day you may forgive me.

WILLIAM ST. JOHN MACARTHY.

I returned the letter to Fleurette without a word. There was nothing to say.

She smiled a little, turned, and dropped it into the heart of the fire. So she stood for one long moment, watching the red flames as they leapt up and consumed it. Then she lifted her arms very slowly and wearily and let them drop again to her sides, as though she shouldered some burden almost too heavy to bear. And as she turned again her eyes were full of tears. But she smiled at me bravely, as one who says: "Bear with me—it is only a passing weakness!" Then she took my arm and coaxed me to drive her to the Club.

Massingham was there and came forward eagerly as we entered.

III.

Three months later William St. John returned from his leave, bronzed and healthy and very good to look upon. He went straight to the Club in search of Fleurette—and then he explained everything.

He told her how angry he had been with her for spoiling his play and causing Tommy Waring, James Travers, George Drury, and Bobby Adair to fall in love with her and dance every evening instead of attending rehearsals. He told her he had taken a secret oath to pay off these old scores and to teach her a lesson in a dramatic manner, and so he had set himself to win her love. He also told her that his scheme had gone terribly wrong, for his strength had not been what he had thought it, and in the process he had fallen in love with

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her himself. "But still," he concluded, "I meant to carry it through if only for the sake of my oath and of dramatic effect."

He had arranged within himself to write that cruel letter, and had had to keep his oath. And so he went away, loving her above his hope of Heaven and knowing that she loved him in return, simply to punish her for her treatment of his friends. And now he had come back—which he *hadn't* arranged to do—and would she forgive him and go on being engaged to him?

Then he held out his arms, and his eyes had the look that a man has only once in a lifetime for only one woman in the world.

Fleurette smiled—a little, strange, hard smile.

"I married Captain Massingham last month!" she said simply, and turned to her husband, who had just come in search of her. Then she gave a little moan and crumpled up in his arms.

Massingham took her away, and I went with them.

So, after all, it was Fleurette, and not William St. John in this instance, who achieved the coveted honours of a dramatic conclusion.

But I wondered very much whether it proved of any consolation to either of them.

I am still wondering.

Fleurette . . . turned to her husband, who had just come in search of her. Then she gave a little moan and crumpled up in his arms.

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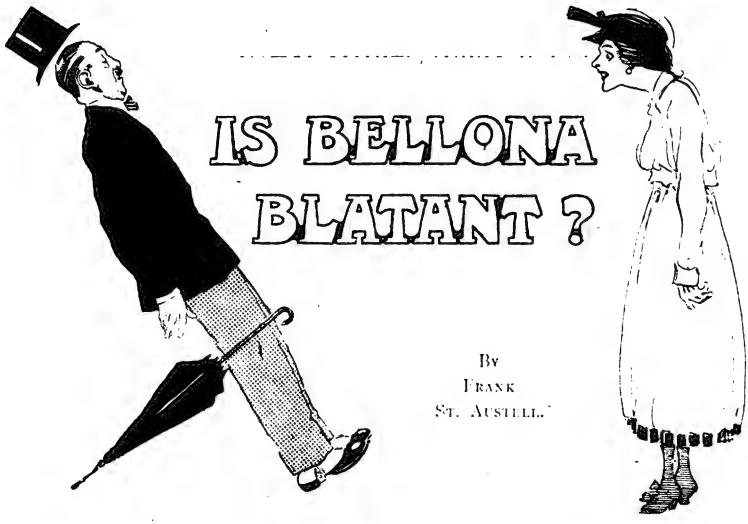

IS BELLONA BLATANT?

By
Frank
St. Austell.

Bellona, according to the cheaper works of reference, was the sister and companion of Mars. Now that so many of the fervent fair are engaged in war work of some sort, like Bellona, the question occurs to thoughtful people: "Does it tend to spoil them, to depreciate their manners, to destroy their charm?" Here is one view of the matter, not necessarily that of everybody.—Ed. R.M.

Candidly, I hesitate to say "yes!" When I see a girl helping to turn out shells, or driving a three-ton lorry, which is not dainty work, or conducting a tram in the rougher districts, I tell myself that if she is rather less drawing-roomesque than she might be, so is her job. And just as the bleating of the lamb excites the tiger, so do these sterner pursuits breed in our girls a firmness that used not to be theirs, or otherwise they would be unable to make a success of the business. But when one has made this much allowance, is there a balance left still on the wrong side, a sort of gruff residue, a faint unmistakable truculence?

On the whole I am afraid there is.

This is not a tilt at the good ladies who are all dressed up and with no place to go. I mean the genuine woman worker with a genuine job that a man used to do, whether she happens to be wearing trousers or still retains a skirt. These people work, even as the pretty munition girl I encountered during the cold snap, carrying on amid snow and ice, dressed simply and suitably in oilskin overalls, gum boots, and an oilskin coat. But work has rendered them a little ferocious, and I wish it hadn't. I wish women need not put into practice so literally those beautiful lines in Henry V.

> "In peace, there's nothing so becomes a man
> As modest stillness and humility.
> But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
> Then imitate the action of the tiger!
> Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood!
> Disguise fair nature with hard-favoured rage,
> Then lend the eye a terrible aspect,
> Let it pry through the portal of the head
> Like the brass cannon."

I hate the cannon eye in a girl. Rightly or wrongly, one seems to encounter it right and left nowadays. The 'bus conductress snaps at one as she punches the ticket; the tube girl puts ice and contempt into her voice. The ordinary war worker going to and fro on her affairs casts a cold and stony glance around her; if one opens a door or gives up a seat in a carriage, she accepts these trifling courtesies with a sort of mute arrogance, too proud to say "thank you." We read of the Prussian jack-boot, but the British Jill-boot tramples on us all day long, to our sorrow.

No doubt every woman worker, if she reads thus far, has already said "pshaw!" and "rubbish!" but she is not a man and cannot realise the attitude of herself and her sisters towards men. Towards women it has

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altered little, for women were always rude to women.

This attitude of aggressive independence is a sad mistake, since it makes it very difficult for a man to offer assistance in any emergencies where a girl's inexperience may be a handicap. A man may see a fair chauffeuse fiddling incompetently with a broken-down car by the wayside and yearn to go to the rescue, but he is a brave man if he dare risk the resentful glare that eyes meant for smiles will probably turn upon him. And, after all, there is nothing criminal about inexperience, whereas humbleness of heart is a charming trait in a beginner.

In pre-war days a girl was usually nothing loth to accept masculine aid in matters demanding strength, or that instinct for screws and bolts which is our heritage since Noah constructed the Ark. Now she appears to think that to accept sympathy or assistance is to admit that she is not big enough for her job—a lamentable attitude which almost makes one sigh for the early Victorian damsels whose clinging helplessness at least gave the mere male an occasional chance to shine.

Men lose their ideals slowly and with infinite pain. To them the sight of munition girls ragging aggressively along the street, staring brazenly with hard, challenging eyes and chi-yiking after soldiers, is pathetic. The other day I travelled upon a 'bus pursued by another 'bus whose inwards clanked dismally. Our conductress from the top of our 'bus jeered noisily at the driver of the afflicted vehicle.

"Yah! Harry Tate—Yah! Harry Tate!" she screamed.

It was a legitimate comment and the driver smiled genially, but that hardly satisfied the lady. She glanced round among her passengers, thirsting for applause. She repeated the joke till we wearied of it. She wanted to draw attention to herself, and did, but not quite the kind of attention her soul longed for. Somehow, since she was a woman, the whole thing grated.

The attitude of the 'bus lady crystallises the whole trouble with women workers. They have the fatal instinct to pose. In twenty years, if they keep on with the work, the girl window-cleaners in trousers, for instance, will no more think of posing than the girl typists do now. At present they and all the rest of them are woefully sex-conscious. Now in work there is no question of sex; it is simply a matter of getting the work done.

It seems a pity that all these women workers, conscientious for the most part and ready to go on till they drop, cannot cure themselves of a manner that tends rather to drive away sympathy and detract from their merits. Probably the manner exists for two reasons; first that women entirely lack discipline, second that they are unaccustomed to exercise authority.

The female of the species can, so to speak, put out her tongue at the

The girl who does war work, whether it be making munitions, acting as 'bus conductress, or working on the land, acquires a new firmness which in some cases develops into truculence and ungraciousness.

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world from her earliest years, and nothing much will happen to her. We no longer chastise our daughters. A man from his cradle onwards is made to understand discipline; his governors and teachers spank it into him and his schoolfellows instil it with fists and boots and anything else knobby and uncomfortable that comes handy. He learns what a girl never learns, that in the last event he will come up against physical force, and that if he won't be good, or pull with the rest, someone bigger than he is will jolly well make him. This gives him a tolerably reasonable idea of his own importance in the world, which, he is taught, is exceedingly small, and so he is never tempted to pose.

As the small male grows up he hands on these priceless lessons to those that come after and learns to exercise authority, but the small female doesn't. A man obeys first and commands after, but a woman never obeys very much, and so tends to overdo the commanding when it comes her way, as now. She has a sort of feeling that *she* wouldn't do as *she* was told unless *she* could help it, so neither will the other people, unless they are suitably impressed at the outset. And, when there is no question of exercising any authority, the woman worker seems possessed with an idea that being new she is on trial and people are looking at her, and if she isn't *very* haughty they may laugh.

Occasionally her behaviour may conceivably be a cloak for nervousness or fatigue. Because she feels a situation may become too much for her she may try to carry it off with a high hand. The relief of tears being impossible, she has resort to temper, which, though quite as spectacular, is far less appealing to the masculine mind, at any rate. Moreover, tears do no harm, save perhaps temporary damage to the weeper's complexion, while temper lacerates the feelings of unoffending citizens.

It all seems rather a pity, and everyone wishes Bellona would try not to be blatant. She is a good girl, and Mars, having much to endure these days, finds his frozen-faced, cannon-eyed sister and companion (in the complementary sense) a little hard to put up with. He notices, too, with some pain, that she has a tendency to despise, hustle, and push about generally, elderly people of both sexes, specimens of what she would call "the last generation." Now these are not all "wash-outs," or if they are it is a stage we shall all reach sooner or later. Respect for his elders the youthful male learns very early, and it lasts him all his life.

Probably the National Service Girl doesn't realise that she is selling her birthright, which is charm, for a mess of pottage, which is freedom from any sort of control, and the right to do as she likes. If she only took a little thought she could have it both ways, and as this is woman's chief delight, I expect she will in the long run, to the relief of all those who admire her already and would like to do it without any "but——"

The 'bus conductress snaps at one as she punches the ticket, and both she and her fellow war-workers evince a painful tendency to despise elderly people of both sexes.

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THE SNIPER SNIPED

By M. McDonnell Bodkin.

War, war is still the cry, "War even to the knife!"

"The chap is a wonder, Morton," said Captain Belton. "I bet twopence he beats you at your own game."

Lieutenant Morton had joined that evening and had dined with the Captain in his dug-out, a cosy apartment twelve feet by ten by eight, with walls of earth patted smooth and hard by a shovel, and a disreputable roof of corrugated-iron.

The dinner had consisted of a double ration of excellent bully beef and stale bread and a single bottle of beer divided with a scrupulous exactitude between them and drunk from tin pannikins.

They were in curious contrast, these two—the Captain grimy and unshaven, his uniform tattered, discoloured, and bespattered with mud, the Lieutenant trim and dapper, in well-fitting khaki, his hair parted smoothly in the middle over a pale intellectual face, clean-shaven but for a slight dandified moustache like the wings of a small black butterfly.

Dinner over, the Captain was half sitting, half lying on his straw bed, and the Lieutenant lounging on a wooden chair, its back tilted against the clay wall, both smoking super-excellent cigars, supplied by a judicious young person in London, sister of the Captain and *fiancée* of the Lieutenant.

The year before the war Lieutenant Morton had won the King's Prize at Bisley and was reputed about the finest shot in the British Army. Perhaps that was the reason the Captain took for granted his interest in the exploits of Corporal Shodder.

"The chap was a star shooter in the halls," the Captain went on slowly between luxurious puffs of blue smoke, "breaking glass balls and all that kind of thing, and he joined at the word 'go.' Most people think that sort of shooting is a mere trick, what circus riding is to hunting. Egad! It wasn't so in his case, anyway. He proved himself a very devil at the butts. Couldn't miss the centre if he tried with his eyes shut. I didn't quite believe the stories I heard myself, but we had a little shooting back of the lines a fortnight ago, and he made us stare. Plum centre every time up to three hundred yards, which was the full stretch of our range.

"The scamp wound up with a sensational performance. His pal, Private Cooly, who was marker, stepped in front of the target just as Shodder was about to fire and clapped an empty bully beef can on his head, and our friend, without a moment's delay, sent a bullet right through the centre of it. Dangerous trick! I suppose I ought to have given them both C.B., but I didn't."

"He must be an out-and-outer," said Morton, deeply interested.

"And no mistake! Curious I should have two such shots in my company, but I rather think this chap could give you your first beating, old man."

"Not my first," drawled Morton, after a vain effort to blow smoke rings which were dissipated by the draught. "I got my first lesson two years ago, just outside Nuremberg. I was regularly licked to the ropes by a chap called Hans Wedderman; he put the bullets to the inch where he wanted them. I hadn't a ghost of a chance from the first. A tall, lank fellow for a German, like Fenimore Cooper's 'Hawkeye,' I thought at the time, but he could give 'Hawk-eye' himself points and a beating."

"That's a coincidence," said the Captain. "Our chap is tall and lank, too. He's a naturalised Swiss, and he has the deuce of a grand 'down' on the Germans. It seems that his grandfather was a watchmaker in a little French village—I forget the name—when the last war broke out, and the beastly scoundrels murdered the old man and woman in cold blood. His mother, who was a girl at the time, escaped still worse than death by the skin of her teeth. She swore him to a bloody vengeance when he

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was quite a kid, and he has never forgotten it; he is always bothering to be let out on his own for a shot at the stragglers, but I don't hold with sniping. Too like cold-blooded murder for my taste!'

"I am curious to have a peep at your prodigy," said Morton.

"And he's curious about you," retorted the Captain. "They tell me he was quite excited when he heard you were to join. Well, you've had a long journey and I've had a hard day, so if you've finished your cigar I think we might both get between the sheets."

By way of good example the Captain turned on his straw bed, and in three minutes was snoring melodiously. The Lieutenant stamped the butt of his cigar into the mud floor, put out the light, picked up his great-coat, and crept through the narrow opening to his own dug-out, opening direct on the trenches and a shade less commodious and luxurious than the Captain's.

Fatigue conquered discomfort and he slept, but about midnight he grew hot and restless, the walls of the dug-out seemed to close on him like a tomb, and, throwing off the great-coat, which constituted his entire bedclothes, in a heap on the straw, he crept out into the trench, and, mounting a short ladder, peered into the desolate No Man's Land that stretched for a thousand yards or so between the German trenches and our own.

A full moon was in the sky, but a strong wind blew, and occasionally clouds drifted across its broad yellow disc, darkening the dreary landscape. At times the moon shone bright and cold, and Morton had a clear view of the level, rugged space that lay between him and the German lines. About mid-distance a triple row of tall trees, bare at the trunks but bushy at the tops, showed black against the white moonshine and threw long black shadows on the ground. To the right and left and in the middle of the wood were the rugged projections of an empty trench which had been captured and recaptured half-a-dozen times, but which neither side could hold against the concentrated fire of the other.

To the watcher fresh from the life and bustle of London the scene was unspeakably lonely and desolate, and filled him with gloomy presentiments. Chilled by dismal thoughts and shivering in the keen night wind, he returned to his narrow dug-out. He put on his great-coat, flung himself again upon the pile of straw, and in five minutes was captured by that stark, dreamless sleep that follows fatigue and excitement.

Next morning he awoke alert and refreshed, with a cheery consciousness of well-being. As he hastily unbuttoned his great-coat, his finger slipped through a buttonhole no tailor had ever made, a clean slit about an inch long that went through cloth and lining. Much surprised, he examined the coat and found a precisely similar one at the back. He was still puzzling over these mysterious slits when he heard a loud outcry in the trenches close at hand, and Captain Belton came running through from his own dug-out, fastening his belt as he came.

Thirty yards off the two officers found a group of men muttering and cursing. The group opened as they came, and they saw a body lying face downwards in the mud of the trench with the heft of a horn-handled knife projecting between his shoulders, and, turning the body over on its back, they recognised the livid face of Fritz Shodder's pal, Private Cooly.

Fritz Shodder himself had vanished while the men jabbered excitedly, offering this and that impossible solution of the tragedy, the most notable being that the Germans had captured Shodder and killed his companion. The truth broke dazzlingly on the mind of Lieutenant Morton. Fritz Shodder, the naturalised Swiss, the crack shot with the "down" on the Germans for the brutal murder of his grandparents, was Hans Wedderman, late of Nuremberg, a German spy in the English trenches. No wonder the scoundrel was excited at the news of Morton's coming and his inevitable recognition! No wonder he had tried to kill him! Lieutenant Morton had not the faintest doubt that the same knife that had pierced Private Cooly's heart had, driven by the same treacherous hand, cut the two slits in his overcoat.

The spy had plainly stolen into his dug-out and in the dim light had stabbed the empty coat lying on the straw in the belief that Morton's body was inside it. Discovering his mistake, he had returned to his friends, having first assassinated his companion.

"You are right, Morton," cried Captain Belton, when the Lieutenant a little later told him what he thought. "The whole thing fits in like the bits of a jig-saw puzzle. I was an ass not to guess it. Heavens! what an escape we had! Anyhow, we are well rid of the treacherous hound. He got poor Cooly, worse luck, but plainly he was waiting for his chance of a big *coup*; if you hadn't turned up as you did he might have played some hellish trick with his friends to wipe out our whole company."

But the men, when the news got about among the trenches, did not share the views of their Captain that they were well rid of the scoundrel. They wanted him back, wanted him badly. The treacherous murder of his pal drove them to absolute frenzy; they were savage as a pack of hounds when the

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Captain Belton could no longer restrain his impatient curiosity. "Beg pardon, Morton," he cried, "but it seems to me absolute tomfoolery! You might tell a fellow what you mean by it, if you mean anything at all." [*Page 135, col. 1.*]

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fox slips into earth just under their noses, and would have torn the spy to pieces if they could have laid their hands on him.

Within an hour it was proved in a most unpleasant fashion that they were not yet rid of the scoundrel. A man who incautiously showed his head an inch over the edge of the trench had a hole neatly drilled through his forehead, and his comrades instantly recognised the handiwork of the German runaway. The distance from the German trenches and a long immunity from surprise had induced a habit of carelessness which the men could not overcome at once. Two other victims were potted before lunch-time and three periscopes smashed. After that the men went about doubled in two, cursing fiercely but ineffectively.

There was not the slightest indication where the shots came from; there was no smoke, no flash, no report; the men dropped dead as if they had been struck by lightning.

After a scanty lunch, for which neither had much appetite, the Captain and the Lieutenant sat and smoked in silent depression. Such deadly sniping must thin their line, and, worse still, must, after a time, tell on the spirits of their men, and the smashing of periscopes would make it hard to keep up an effective observation of the enemy.

"It wouldn't be so devilish if we had a notion where the shots came from," growled the Captain. "I fancy he gets along up and down that old trench in front of the trees. I would rush it if I thought I could nab him; the men would go straight through hell's fire to lay their hands on the scoundrel. But it is too big a risk on the off chance."

"Too big a risk, anyway, I should think," responded the Lieutenant. "The Germans have had time to get their machine-guns properly trained; they would make mincemeat of us before we got a hundred yards from our trenches."

The Captain grunted a sulky assent.

"How does the chap do it, blast him?" he growled. "Not a sound, not a glimpse of smoke; our man just topples over dead."

"Smokeless powder and a silencer," explained Morton. "I'm not sure how the flash is hidden; must have rigged up some kind of screen." Then, to the Captain's utter amazement, Morton threw away his cigar, half-smoked, jumped to his feet, and cried: "I've got it!"

"Got what?" growled the Captain, stamping on the cigar which was smouldering under the straw.

"I've got Wedderman," Morton retorted.

"Good biz! When? How? Where?" cried the Captain now more excited than the Lieutenant, who had cooled down to his customary calm as suddenly as he had flared up.

"It will take a bit of thinking and a bit of doing," he replied soberly. "If all goes well I hope to bag him before sunset, but I shall want a few things for my scheme."

"You may have anything that there is to have."

"Oh, I'm not exacting. I shall want two empty beef tins, two soldiers' caps, and a couple of sticks, that's all!"

"You are not jesting, Morton," began the Captain angrily, "because, if you are, let me tell you——"

"Jesting?" interrupted the other. "No fear! It's the bare truth to say that I never in my whole life was half so serious as I am at this moment. If you give me a free hand, sir, I hope to show you results before evening."

"Please yourself," said the Captain, still a little sulky. "I don't pretend to know what kind of game you are up to, but I am sure you wouldn't play any fool trick in such a devilish business as this."

Morton lost no time in getting to work. He collected his outfit of caps, tins, and sticks at the end of fifty yards of straight trench running parallel with the row of trees in No Man's Land, and also took with him the keen knife which the spy had driven through his empty coat and through the body of poor Cooly. With the knife he dug a hole in the bottom of one of the tins down whose face he had already drawn a broad white line. In the hole at the bottom of the tin he secured a pointed stick, and, fixing a cap on the top, he raised it very carefully, so that the line down the front was directly at right angles to the line of the trenches.

He had not long to wait. There was a tang of metal as the sniper's ball took it fairly in the centre. Morton's hand tingled at the shock as he drew the perforated tin quickly into cover.

There were two clean holes cut in the tin by the high velocity bullet; the hole of entrance on the right hand of the white line was smaller than the hole of exit and about an inch higher.

Carefully adjusting the tin so that the line on its face was again at right angles to the trench, Morton thrust a long straight rod through the two holes, and found it pointed right at the bushy tops of the row of trees at a point well to the right of where he stood.

His lips tightened to a grim smile, and without a word he pushed his way through the group of soldiers who had watched his extraordinary performance in open-eyed, open-mouthed amazement. Carrying the

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unwounded bully-beef tin and the accessories, and followed by Captain Belton, he made his way to the other end of the straight trench fifty yards off. Here he repeated his singular experiment with precisely the same result, only this time the bullet entered the tin on the left of the white line. Again he thrust the rod through the two bullet-holes, and again it pointed to the same spot in the bushy tree-tops, this time a little to his left.

Captain Belton could no longer restrain his impatient curiosity.

"Beg pardon, Morton," he cried, "but it seems to me absolute tomfoolery! You might tell a fellow what you mean by it, if you mean anything at all."

"We were talking last night of Cooper's 'Hawk-eye,'" said Morton with apparent irrelevance. "Did you ever read a book of his called 'The Bee-Hunter'?"

This extraordinary answer touched the Captain's explosive temper like a spark to gunpowder.

"Now what the devil do you mean by that? Have a bit of wit, man!"

"Easy on, Captain! I'm quite serious, as you will see in a moment. You know I'm well up in my Cooper. I have read his yarns over and over again, stories of sharp-shooting always fetched me from a boy. But 'The Bee-Hunter' is a bit off the line; the hero hunted, not wild beasts, but wild honey. He caught a bee on the rampage, and let him stuff himself from a bit of honeycomb the hunter carried around with him. The released bee went straight for the hive with his plunder, and the bee-hunter noted the line of flight. Then he caught another chap a few hundred yards off, fed him up and let him loose. The angle where the two lines met was the hive, see?

"Hanged if I do! We have no bees here," said the bewildered Captain, "except, maybe, a bee in your bonnet."

"We have a bee-line, Captain," retorted Morton, pointing through the rod projecting through the bullet-holes. "The straight lines from where the ball came are the straight lines back, and the angle where those two lines meet is that bushy tree-top to the right. Just have a peep through your periscope before it gets smashed, and you'll see what I mean."

Then it dawned suddenly on the Captain. "Egad! Morton, you're a wonder!" he cried in honest admiration.

"There's nothing done yet," rejoined Morton modestly, "but as sure as I stand here our dear friend Wedderman is perched up in that tree-top about six hundred yards off, as well as I could calculate without instruments, and fifty feet or so from the ground. He has probably some sort of platform rigged out and a rope to get up and down by; shouldn't wonder if he has a green shade to prevent any chance of us getting a glimpse of him through the leaves. Now, Captain, get every periscope in the trenches up together and give me a fair chance."

Morton thrust his rifle-barrel cautiously through a loophole, and carefully sighted the tree-top. The sun was setting behind the trees, and little sparkles of red light twinkled in the thick foliage; through one dark patch no light showed.

Morton sighted his rifle more carefully than he had ever sighted for a bull's-eye at Bisley. Three times he fired, varying his aim a little each time. At the third shot he saw in his periscope a tumult amongst the boughs; then a long, lank figure dropped from the shelter, and hung clear between the tree-tops, outlined black and rigid against the red of the sunset.

Morton lifted his head above the verge of the trenches for his fourth shot, and the swinging figure collapsed and fell.

"I win this match, Herr Wedderman," he said softly, while the exultant cheers of the men rolled like thunder across No Man's Land to the ears of the German trenches a thousand yards away.

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The June CAP and BELLS

A RATIONAL BEING.

She eyed him with intense disdain
At dinner time one night;
He made no effort to restrain
His healthy appetite.

Indeed he seemed most pointedly
Food rations to ignore;
He ate each course, as she could see,
And even asked for more!

But, worthy patriots, I pray
Don't write him down a "hog,"
Who helps the Huns upon their way—
Because he was a dog!

Leslie M. Oyler

SPARKLING CONVERSATION.

COUNTRY YOKEL (opening conversation): "Are you 'eard as Jim Bates' father says he'll give 'im the sack?"

FRIEND (after pause): "Whose father?"

COUNTRY YOKEL: "Why, Jim Bates'."

FRIEND (after pause): "Jim Bates' who?"

COUNTRY YOKEL: "Why, Jim Bates' father!"

FRIEND (after pause): "Jim Bates' father. Well, what does he say?"

COUNTRY YOKEL: "Says he'll give 'im the sack."

FRIEND (after pause): "Give 'im the what?"

COUNTRY YOKEL: "Give 'im the sack!"

FRIEND (after pause): "Give who the sack?"

COUNTRY YOKEL: "Why, Jim Bates."

FRIEND (after long pause): "Ah, I 'eard that the day before yesterday."

FULLY QUALIFIED.

The clergyman had advertised for a butler, and the next morning after breakfast a well-dressed, clean-shaven young man in black was ushered into his study.

"Name, please?" asked the clergyman.

"Hilary Arbuthnot, sir."

"Age?"

"Twenty-eight."

"What work have you been accustomed to?"

"I am a lawyer, sir."

The clergyman started. This was odd. However, he knew many were called in the law, but few chosen.

"But," he said, "do you understand the conduct of a household?"

"In a general way, yes," murmured the applicant.

"Can you carve?"

"Yes."

"Wash glass and silver?"

"I—er—think so."

The young man seemed embarrassed. He frowned and blushed. Just then the clergyman's wife entered.

"Are you married?" was the first question.

"That," said the young man, "was what I called to see your husband about, madam. I desire to know if he can make it convenient to officiate at my wedding at noon next Thursday week."

JOCK (to bewildered Frenchman): "Hech, ma braw laddie, dinna ye ken whaur it is we are the noo?"

FRENCHMAN: "Mais, non, je ne comp——"

SANDY: "Haud yer tongue, Jock; you puir body doesna onderstand good Breetish."

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A SHATTERED IDYLL.

Mary was a young wife who decided to go back to her old profession as typist in order to swell the family income.

She secured a billet at thirty shillings a week, and as she waited for her husband to come home, she fancied him saying: "Mercenary girl, you must have no profession outside my arms! I cannot spare you. I must have you here by my side, where I can shield you from work and worry. Home is your realm. I will not hear of it!"

A key in the front-door proclaimed her husband's arrival.

"George, I have got a billet at thirty shillings a week," she said dramatically.

"Is it permanent?" asked George.

THE (W)HOLE TRUTH.

DEFENDING COUNSEL: "You say that the wall is eight feet high, and that you were standing on the ground—not mounted on a ladder or anything?"

WITNESS: "I do."

COUNSEL (triumphantly): "Then perhaps you will kindly explain how you, a man a little over five feet, could see over a wall eight feet high, and watch the prisoner's actions!"

WITNESS (calmly): "There's a hole in the wall."

FOR THE RELIEF OF THE PARISH.

At a certain midland town there is a man who is so homely that it has been said of him his face is an "offence to the landscape."

One Bank Holiday he was seated on a rustic bridge some distance outside the town, when a tourist came by, and, after gazing at the "offence" some moments, he said: "Eh, but th'art ugly!"

"Well," replied the other in an aggrieved tone, "I can't help it, can I?"

The tourist pondered a moment, and then said:

"Tha might stay at whoam!"

REBUKING RICHARD.

Poor Mrs. Jinks had had a lot of trouble with her wayward son.

"I am afraid," said a friend of hers one day, "that you are not nearly firm enough with him. You should admonish him more, and tell him just what is right and wrong."

"On the contrary," said Mrs. Jinks, "I sometimes fear I have been too harsh with him. I have said one or two very hard things lately."

"Why, what have you said?"

"I have said, 'Richard! Richard!' on several occasions."

Mrs. VON TIRP: "Dear me! This shredded wheat is very tough."

"OPEN, SESAME!"

It was really very sweet, and the elderly visitor, who was awaiting the hostess in the drawing-room, smiled benignly as children's voices, coming from somewhere below, joined in the melodious strains of "Come back to Erin."

Desirous of hearing still more, she stepped out to the head of the stairs and listened. Then, above the melody, she discerned the hoarse whisper of a small boy:

"Sing up, Sis! Sing up! One more turn o' the 'airpin 'll do it; but if yer don't make more row ma'll hear the lock go click!"

Then suddenly the singing stopped—the pantry door had yielded.

A CONTRAST.

The skylark merrily did sing,
The earth was fairyland,
That day when Percy placed the ring
Upon Belinda's hand.

But oh, the bills he's had to pay
For hats since they were wed!
He doesn't ring her hands, they say—
He wrings his own instead!

Elsie Skeet.

A WHOLESOME DIET.

A correspondent asks: "What shall I get for moths?"

We should not get anything; but if our correspondent is fond of the moths, a very acceptable present would be a sealskin jacket.

ANOTHER "OFFENSIVE."

VERY JUVENILE CLERK: "Mornin', my dear. Hadn't time to get my ticket——"

TICKET COLLECTOR: "Here you are, Phyllis.—half single from Brixton."

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FLYING HIGH.

HISTORY PROFESSOR: "Now can any student mention an Englishman who endeavoured to raise legislation to a higher plane?"

STUDENT: "Yes, sir; Guy Fawkes."

NOT SO DUSTY.

There is a certain long-suffering father whose nerves sometimes give way under the constant fire o questions from his talkative eight-year-old son.

"Dad," asked the youngster, just as the old man had one evening settled down for a perusal of his newspaper. "Dad, am I made of dust?"

"I think not!" responded the unhappy parent. 'Otherw se you'd dry up now and then."

A DEPENDABLE GUIDE.

FRIEND: "What is the first thing you do when a man presents himself to you for consultation?"

DOCTOR: "I ask him if he has a car."

FRIEND: "What do you learn from that?"

DOCTOR: "If he has one, I know he is wealthy—and if he hasn't, I know he is healthy."

ALL OF THE BEST.

"Do you have matins in this church?" asked the High Church visitor of the verger of the village church.

"Mattin's—no, indeed," replied that dignitary, with scorn; "we has oilcloth, and right up the c'ancel too!"

NON-COMMITTAL!

CUSTOMER: "Have you new-laid eggs that you can guarantee?"
SHOPMAN: "We keep eggs, madam."

BIRDS OF A FEATHER.

STRANGER (at Dead Man's Gulch): "But when you lynch a man so hurriedly isn't there great danger of making a mistake?"

BRONCHO PETE: "Not the least in the world, stranger; yer can't make no great mistake lynching anybody in this 'ere town."

CURT.

A cyclist was passing through a village at three in the morning, and, wanting some refreshment, knocked at the door of a house where he saw an open window.

VOICE (from within): "Who are you?"

CYCLIST: "A traveller."

VOICE: "Then travel!"

MODEST REQUIREMENTS.

STERN PARENT (to a young applicant for his daughter's hand): "Young man, can you support a family?"

YOUNG MAN (meekly): "I only wanted Sarah."

A SINGULAR PRACTICE.

NURSE (to young doctor): "Your practice is waiting, sir. Shall I show him in?"

LIFE'S TRAGEDIES.

WIFE: "Can you remember the first cigar you ever smoked, John?"

HUSBAND: "Yes, love; also my first sea voyage and our wedding day."

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"Well, Jarge, I hear your dog didn't get the prize because 'is legs were too short?"
"Eh! so squire says, but I don't know 'ow 'e makes that out. They reach the ground all right."

PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT.

Jimmy Pouter was a little man, and as pugnacious as a ferret until he met someone bigger than himself. One day he went into a restaurant, very hungry and thirsty. He noticed, a few tables away, a huge man—one of the bristling kind—tucking into a large portion of roast duck.

Jimmy ordered some. When, however, the waiter brought it to him, he noticed that his lot was only about half the size of the big man's.

"Look here," Jimmy remarked truculently to the waiter, "this portion isn't anything like as big as that fat fellow's over there! What do you mean by it, sir? My money's as good as his, I suppose? Where's the manager?"

The waiter looked at the big man.

"That is the manager, sir!" he said.

THEY HAVE THEIR USES.

"This world would be a pleasanter place if there were not so many fools in it."

"Yes, but it would be more difficult to make a living."

A SHINING FEAT.

FIRST BOOTBLACK: "Wot's the matter, Jim? Yer looks played out!"

SECOND BOOTBLACK: "Played out! I should think I am. Just been giving two policemen a shine!"

THE BETTER PART.

FAT LADY (in the park): "I am going to ride on one of the donkeys, and I'll pay for one for you if you like to accompany me."

SMALL BOY: "Thankee, mum, but I'd rather sit here an' laugh."

APPROPRIATE!

When Jack met Mabel at a dance
(From eight o'clock till two),
The thing that chiefly caught his eye
Was Mabel's dainty shoe.

He wedded her the other day,
And turned to wave good-bye,
When—swish!—came that same satin shoe,
And caught him in the eye.

Anne Page.

A LANTERN STORY.

A certain gentleman, living in the country, who was something of a *bon viveur*, was invited to dinner by a neighbour. The night was very dark, and in order to guide him on his way he took with him the stable lantern, a clumsy old thing bound round with wires. The gentleman reached his friend's house in safety and enjoyed himself extremely. The dinner was good and the wine excellent.

Presently the hour for the return journey arrived. He forgot to relight his lantern, but though the moon refused to shine he arrived home all right. On the following morning he could not find his precious lantern, so he sent his gardener with a note to his friend couched in the following terms:

DEAR JONES,—Will you kindly return to the bearer the stable lantern which I left at your house last night?—Yours sincerely, J. R. ROBINSON.

He received the following reply:

DEAR ROBINSON,—I am returning the lantern, but will you kindly send back the parrot and its cage which you took away with you last night instead of your lantern?—Yours sincerely, F. P. JONES

THE "THIRTY-FIVE POUND LOOK."

How it feels to be a Sub. with an extensive kit and a wholesome regard for the regulation which limits his baggage to thirty-five pounds.

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Delicate

By F. E. Baily.

Mr. Cyprian Gumblay (invalided) sat in the smoking-room of his Half Moon Street apartments, clad in irreproachable tweeds, and stared pensively at five shell-cases which adorned the mantelpiece. It was five-thirty of a grey afternoon in late winter. In spite of his favourite tobacco, Care, the grim horseman, rode behind Mr. Gumblay, since, for the life of him, he could not think what to do.

"London is a desert," he observed sadly to no one at all. "All the men I know are out there; a multiplicity of girls fails to amuse me somehow. They are all the same—one kisses them and ceases to take any further interest. Before one kisses them they have all come down from heaven on the last cloud; afterwards they may all go home in the last 'bus—it is immaterial. I suppose I had better dine out, or otherwise I shall have to dine at home."

He got up and stood for a moment, a tall, slight figure, weariness stamped on every line of his pale, rather thin face. Lucas, the impeccable servant, prepared the bath and evening kit with solicitude in each movement of his deft, sufficient hands.

Clad in faultless evening dress, Mr. Gumblay departed to the Restaurant *Magnifique*, because it was the only one he could endure. The masterly simplicity of the *decor* soothed his jangled nerves, and the food was at least eatable.

Glancing about him, he perceived another solitary diner at a neighbouring table. This person, although obviously a gentleman, possessed the hawk-like aspect of those who engage in some business enterprise. His clothes certainly came from Savile Row, but he displayed eagerness and vivacity foreign to the upper classes. He ate with relish, appearing to enjoy food for its own sake. Mr. Gumblay could not quite make him out.

"Possibly a munition maker," he reflected, "or an inspector of something under the Defence of the Realm Act. I understand a

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Fabrics.

Invalided out of the Army, Mr. Gumblay sought solace from utter boredom in unravelling the tangled webs of other people's love affairs. How he smoothed the pathway of a beautiful and high-born maiden, and brought her lover to a sense of his own good fortune, is charmingly described in the following story.

few of them have been decently brought up."

The waiter broke in on these musings, offering an *entrée*. By some extraordinary carelessness he spilt a certain amount of the sauce on Mr. Gumblay's coat. Many apologies and the use of a table napkin could not wipe out the stain; the coat appeared to be ruined for ever. This little *contretemps* did not escape the solitary diner, whose keen eyes took in the whole affair. He said nothing, waiting patiently till Mr. Gumblay had arrived at coffee and a liqueur. Then he approached and bowed.

"Good evening," said Mr. Gumblay pleasantly, in spite of the accident.

The stranger smiled a smile of considerable charm.

"I dare say I appear a little gratuitous, but I couldn't help noticing what has just occurred. If you would allow me, I can help you in the matter. Although your coat may appear to you quite ruined, I assure you it can be cleaned so that no one could ever detect the stain. I'm an expert in these matters."

Mr. Gumblay looked at him out of cold blue eyes.

"Really I thought we were safe from commercial enterprise in the better-class restaurants. Why not send me a circular in the morning? I have a large waste-paper basket at home."

The stranger smiled again, and his smile was more charming than ever.

"Do I really look like that sort of person?" he asked.

"No," said Mr. Gumblay, "and that is why you add disappointment to natural

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irritation. But the coffee here is passable and the Grand Marnier not bad, so do sit down and tell me all about it. After all, I have nothing to do this evening, and commerce is the backbone of the country."

"Thank you. My name is Brand."

"Mine is Gumblay. Have one of these cigars, will you?" Mr. Gumblay indicated the box and poured amber fluid into his guest's glass with a hospitable hand.

Mr. Brand sat down and rested his chin in his hand.

"You have no idea how extraordinarily romantic this business of cleaning is," he began dreamily. "I dare say you think we chuck a garment into a petrol bath, and that's the whole idea. So it used to be until I redeemed the entire enterprise. But I said: 'This is a beautiful art. We purify fabrics — often beautiful fabrics—from the dross of every day. Why not do it beautifully?' My system is very interesting. You see, all this work is done by girls, and my idea is to grade the work according to the girls. For plain, robust work—suits and overcoats and so on—I have plain, robust girls, generally the Scotch type. They work in *ateliers* decorated in a workmanlike brown. For ladies' garments of the less decorative kind I employ rather older girls who have been good-looking but are now—shall we say?—just past their zenith. Their workrooms are carried out in blue and white."

"Not a bad idea," commented Mr. Gumblay with faint interest. "I suppose an ugly Scotch girl would do my coat in a brown room? Go on!"

"But for lovely things such as undies and evening gowns the studios are a positive poem. They are all designed in shades of rose silk, and I flatter myself the work is done by the most beautiful girls in England. In case they should be spoilt by names such as Miss Brown, Miss Huggins, or something dreadful of that sort, we call them by House Names of our own. Fleurette, for instance, specialises in lingerie and evening gowns. All the expensive *dessous* are in the care of Rosalind. These girls have a uniform designed by Bakst. I should like to show you round my place, if you would care to come."

Mr. Gumblay twisted his liqueur glass thoughtfully. This romantic cleaner interested him. The man's clear-cut, artistic face, his firm, well-set figure, and general air of capability contradicted any idea of fantastic nonsense. Also the rose studios had an appeal of their own.

"It is very kind of you, Brand. I shall be delighted," said Mr. Gumblay at last.

"Good! Then perhaps to-morrow at eleven? May I call for you in my car?"

"Thank you. I live at 2005 Half Moon Street."

"And meanwhile I have a box at the Frivolity Theatre. We clean all the dresses there. I can recommend the bathing scene in the third act. Will you waste an hour there with me?"

"You are very good. I'm quite at a loose end. By all means," replied Mr. Gumblay, and went forth with his new acquaintance.

II.

"If you don't mind," suggested Henry Brand, "I'll leave you in charge of Rosalind. My correspondence is very heavy, and I like to get my letters off early. Do excuse me for an hour."

He departed with quick, lithe steps, casting glances this way and that, an idealist in business, terrible to all competitors. Mr. Gumblay let his eyes wander over Rosalind, to whom he had just been presented.

Her long tunic, whose delightfully conceived lines set off her perfect figure to the greatest advantage, and short skirt, of a darker rose shade than the wonderful salon, were exactly suited to her complexion. Her hair, perfect ash colour, was dressed cunningly to exhibit its wonderful rippling beauty. The tunic was open at the throat, and the loose sleeves came only to the elbow. Mr. Gumblay thought he had never seen such a golden skin in all his extensive wanderings. He was able to survey Rosalind with the greatest deliberation because for the moment she had forgotten him. Her violet eyes followed every movement of Henry Brand as he strode from the room.

"You must let me show you everything, please," she said presently in a low, charming voice. "There is nothing like my department in the whole of England. We do work that even the French would refuse to undertake. Look at this, for instance."

Rosalind took from the hand of a dark girl with a face the colour of old ivory and lips just parted in a sort of hushed wonder, a filmy garment made of such delicate material that gossamer seemed coarse by comparison, and explained how such fabrics might be handled in safety. Mr. Gumblay listened courteously, but his interest centred rather in Rosalind than her work. After all, he was but human.

"Come into my room," suggested Rosalind at last, when Mr. Gumblay had toured the entire salon, and seen more breathlessly beautiful girls in an hour than in all the balance of an ill-spent life. "I generally have a cup of coffee at this time. Do let me give you one."

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Rosalind took . . . a filmy garment made of such delicate material that gossamer seemed coarse by comparison, and explained how such fabrics might be handled in safety. Mr. Gumbiay listened courteously, but his interest centred rather in Rosalind than her work.

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She led him into her own sanctum, fitted with a satinwood desk and wicker armchairs upholstered in the prevalent colour. Mr. Gumblay sank gratefully into one and watched Rosalind toy with an electric heater, make delicious coffee, and produce a cake and cigarettes. Then he rose and ministered to her with respectful deference.

"Rosalind," he said at length, gazing frankly at her beautiful profile, "what makes you go in for all this tomfoolery? Excuse my calling you by that ridiculous name, but I am too well brought up to call you 'Miss,' and it's all the name that I know. Don't tell me if you don't want to, but permit me to point out that you are far too intelligent for this kind of thing."

He waved a mildly contemptuous hand towards the beautiful cleaners on the other side of a glass and oxydised partition.

"I doubt, indeed," he went on cruelly, "if you know very much about cleaning. I suggest to you that this beauty chorus is an advertisement."

A lovely colour crept into Rosalind's face, and she smiled a remote and tender smile.

"My dear Mr. Gumblay, my reasons are a woman's, very profound, complicated, and inexplicable. If you want to know my name, I am the Honourable Eveleen Creagh. My reasons are that I am just turned twenty-one, and doing as I like for the first time. Mr. Brand gave me the job, and taught me; it keeps me, and a little over, and it annoys my father. I think those are excellent reasons."

"Then your father is Lord Fitz-Simpson," commented Mr. Gumblay, aloud, brooding internally on her intonation of the words "Mr. Brand." "I've shot before now at Bokenhurst, but I s'pose you were in your flapper stage then. Behold in me an old friend of the family—so old that I feel I might ask you to tea. Do say you will come. May it be to-morrow, if Brand will let you off?"

Rosalind studied her charming ankles pensively. In all the world there was nothing more inscrutable than her pretty face. Then she glanced up and laughed.

"I'll come with pleasure. Where do I find you?"

"2005 Half Moon Street, is my address," said Mr. Gumblay, getting up on to his beautifully shod feet, "and here is Brand, looking as cheerful as the fat boy of Peckham. I wonder what he finds in this world to feel so pleasant about?"

Henry Brand tapped politely on Rosalind's door and entered. He glanced at her approvingly, though the approval struck Mr. Gumblay as bestowed rather by Mr. Brand on himself for engaging such a delightfully ornamental person than on Rosalind. As for Rosalind, she became suffused with a subtle radiance that disgusted Mr. Gumblay.

"She is in love with him," he told himself scornfully. "The fellow is passable, but as for her marrying him—pshaw!" He spoke with all a man's horror of a girl falling in love with whom she likes.

"A new Government contract," beamed Henry Brand. "Three hundred thousand khaki suits to be claimed. I must double my staff of Scotch girls. Rosalind, will you please ring up the training establishment at Auchterlochty and ask Miss McTaggart to send a fresh draft down to us? After all, this may not be the artistic side of the work, which interests us chiefly, but we must do our duty."

"Quite so. Will you lunch with me, Brand?" put in Mr. Gumblay, shooting a secret and deadly glance of mockery at Rosalind. "I have spent a delightful morning here. Come along, and I will tell you which of your girls I like best."

"I don't know whether art is greater than the artist, or the artist greater than art," observed Mr. Brand a little later, attacking mutton cutlets *à la Réforme* with obvious delight, "but at any rate I shall have a chance to decide to-morrow evening. I'm taking Kitty Congreve out to dinner—a most charming young person; she's Maida Vale in *The Belle of the Bathing Machine*, that show we went to last night."

"I wish I could meet Miss Congreve," said Mr. Gumblay untruthfully. "She must be very delightful"

"Now, if we could only find a girl for you we could make up four. Who on earth——?"

The devil entered into Mr. Gumblay.

"Why not Rosalind?" he asked politely. "I rather like Rosalind. She is an uncommon type—interesting, and all that."

"Leave it to me," said Henry Brand wisely. "I'll arrange everything. Shall we say the *Sans Souci* at seven sharp? Kitty doesn't go on till ten, so there'll be oceans of time. Good!"

III.

Rosalind, in two shades of blue, both heavenly, sat curled up on Mr. Gumblay's largest Chesterfield, a cup of tea in her hand and a *petit four* in her rose-pink mouth. She being, for the moment, speechless, Mr. Gumblay launched his attack.

"Rosalind," he began, leaning back in his armchair, a little pale, a little weary, looking every moment of his twenty-seven years, "Honourable Eveleen, you are in love with Brand."

Ten thousand laughing devils shone in

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Rosalind's violet eyes. She blushed adorably, smiled as widely as the *petit four* would let her, and met his glance squarely.

"I know I am. Of course you hate the idea. You think he isn't good enough for me. You would think *you* were good enough, but then you don't want me. Neither does Henry, but that's my affair. Men are very strange and particular about the man a girl they approve of but don't want themselves may fall in love with. He is never quite—well, quite, is he?"

Mr. Gumblay smiled a smile sadder than a flapper's tears.

"I shall do nothing," he said. "I shall let you drift. I almost made up my mind to in Piccadilly yesterday. What do you see in Henry? He bathes every day and shaves, and dresses creditably, he is good-looking and a gentleman, he has ideas, he is artistic, and he possesses a head for business. Beyond these I see nothing in him. He is too simple by nature to amuse a woman for an afternoon, let alone for eternity. Eternity is a long time to spend with an un-complex husband. What is it that attracts you?"

"Look at me. I'm not exactly plain, am I? A good many men made fools of themselves over me years ago. But Henry's absolutely unconscious of my appearance. If he did anything he would pat me on the head as if I were a little child. That's so unusual that it fascinates me. I like unusual men. You're awfully usual. Besides, he's frightfully clever, and I like men who are clever. Finally, he's made me fall in love, a thing I could never do before. Surely that's something? And I've got to make him fall in love with me. I don't know how, and that's everything. None of the old tricks will do. Now, do you realise he's a genius?"

"He is taking Kitty Congreve from *The Belle of the Bathing Machine* out to dinner to-morrow night; that's usual enough, anyhow."

"And you're taking me, which is fairly commonplace. I do so look forward to to-morrow night: it'll be so instructive. And I may have to lure him away from Kitty. Can you imagine anything more exciting?"

She drank her tea with feverish thirst, and Mr. Gumblay refilled the cup solicitously. The situation almost amused him.

"I have been taught that a girl likes to be stalked, not to do her own stalking and then run away in order to be run after," he complained. "At my age it is difficult to revise one's theories of life."

Rosalind got up to go. She stood for a second, looking very demure and good.

"I know you want to help me. It's most awfully, awfully sweet of you."

Mr. Gumblay held the door for her with knightly courtesy.

"You make me feel my years very acutely," he complained. "Pretty ladies only tell the truth to the obsolete. Now you have told me nothing else, and I believe every word of it. *Good* afternoon."

IV.

Mr. Brand had bespoken the black-and-gold saion of the restaurant *Sans Souci*. There Mr. Gumblay, bringing Rosalind, in cream, met Kitty Congreve, a lyric in gold. Henry Brand, in a genial and kindly mood, his clear-cut face lit by the welcoming smile of the charming host, inclined, as it were, neither to the right nor the left. Having chosen Kitty, he was equally satisfied to enjoy the bright glances either of Kitty or Rosalind.

With Mr. Gumblay things were otherwise. Rosalind attracted him by her sheer perfection, but he knew her heart beat for another. Possessed by some wild, unfathomable instinct, he envied Rosalind her passion for Brand, and longed to fall in love himself. In consequence, he considered Kitty with anxious care. Could he or could he not?

Kitty stood before him, a flawless example of her type. Every detail of her toilette showed that slight yet masterly exaggeration which is the birthright of the stage. Rosalind, having neglected nothing in order to be beautiful, left it at that.

In the case of Kitty, Mr. Gumblay was perfectly aware of her face-powder, the delicate colour she had added to her cheeks, the hairdresser's labours over her night-black hair, the rose-tint on her finger-nails, the two-guinea flask of perfume given her by a brigadier-general. Feeling himself to be unjust, he yet realised that by contrast Rosalind became a thought flat and indefinite. He was very tired, and his weary mind needed, perhaps, the stimulus of these obvious attractions.

Rosalind sat opposite him, resting her chin on her beautiful hands, radiating happiness because she was near Henry Brand. Mr Gumblay turned to Kitty.

"You are very lovely, *très chère!*" he murmured caressingly. "It must have taken you an awful long time. How ever did you manage it?"

"It was all for you," she replied, looking at him with one of those long looks peculiar to the stage, which might mean anything and actually mean nothing whatever. "Henry said he was bringing the nicest man he knew, so of course I took pains, and bought a cake of soap and all that. I wanted you to fall in love with me. I'm considered rather attractive."

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"Attractive!" snorted Mr. Gumblay. "You are a goddess from Olympus. You are Cleopatra and Helen of Troy rolled into one. I am positively frightened of you. But there is Brand flirting with Rosalind, whom he sees all day long, so I suppose I must risk it."

"I see her in a new light," protested Henry Brand. "This evening she is a butterfly. I think I prefer the butterfly. They are attractive little insects."

"Then, perhaps, you might amuse me, for Mr. Gumblay can only look at Miss Congreve," she said. "It's the duty of the host to be kind to the wallflowers."

Mr. Gumblay, turning ostentatiously to hold Kitty's hand, felt within him amused contempt. He saw so plainly how it was with Rosalind; he was monopolising Kitty for her benefit, and yet Brand remained blind.

"Heaven preserve him!" exclaimed Mr. Gumblay to his soul. Then he arose, stepped across to the piano and began to play very softly the latest rag.

"You are alleged to sing, Kitty," he called. "According to the theatre programmes you have a voice. Do sing something now. Think who is asking you!"

But Kitty had already started towards him with the gait of a person both of whose feet have gone to sleep, which is supposed by British actresses to be that of the coloured population of the United States. And she sang, with a strong American accent:

I wanna go—back—to—my—home in Oklahoma,
To my dear old mother there;
Oh, those dear home faces at the station,
Standing there so patient to give me an ovation!
There'll be Mae and Mame and good old Uncle Hiram,
So I can no longer roam
I'm gwine back on the railroad track
To my Oklahoma home!

When it became time to leave for the Frivolity Theatre, Henry Brand wished to convey the entire party in his car, but Mr. Gumblay demurred.

"I have my feelings," he observed plaintively. "Rosalind, whom I brought, has neglected me pointedly all the evening. Kitty, till recently an entire stranger, has spared no pains to be charming. I think I see my Chinese Daimler on the rank over there. You may have your Rosalind, Brand. Kitty and I are going in my car, *alone*."

Henry Brand turned to see the Hon. Eveleen Creagh standing very calm, aloof, and aristocratic, an expensive fur coat clasping her slender form, waiting to be taken to the theatre. And of a sudden the knowledge came to him that here was a very perfect lady who would make him a very perfect wife, that he had been blind, deaf and dumb never to have realised it before, that it was very nearly too late, and oh, good gracious!

With entirely new humbleness he led her to his waiting car, and her heart burst into song because at last she knew. But he only thought her cold and virginal, and became very afraid.

"Rosalind," he began very low, "Eveleen, I love you. I don't know how to tell you. I've been restless and miserable for a long time, and I can't bear it any longer. Rosalind, I——"

His arm stole round her and his lips sought for hers, but she drew away.

"It's the evening and the atmosphere, my dear friend," and her voice shook because she feared she spoke the truth. "I'm not really a little shop girl, you know, although I choose to work as one. Please don't."

For a moment he hesitated. Then he realised he did love her, and, with the inspiration that sometimes comes to lovers, he held her in spite of herself.

"It's neither. I know I've been very wrong to let you spend hours an l hours a day in that beastly rose salon, but you wanted to, Eveleen, and all I want is to give you what you want. And I do love you, ind ed, indeed I do. *Please*, Eveleen! Don't turn your head away, little heart."

So, exquisitely, against her will, as every woman loves to be, Eveleen was kissed.

V.

In the morning Mr. Gumblay, who always wrote in bed when he could, leant on one pale-blue silk elbow in his Half Moon Street bedroom and unburdened himself as follows:

DARLING ROSALIND,

I gathered from the state of your hair when you reached the theatre that you were engaged. A thousand congratulations. When I tell you that, as you may have observed, I became almost vulgar last night in order to facilitate your conquest, let this be the measure of my esteem for you.

Never ask your husband any questions, nor permit him to question you. This is the secret of successful marriage.

Every good wish from

Your slave,
CYPRIAN GUMBLAY.

"Lucas," called Mr. Gumblay as he sealed the envelope, "take another of those shell-cases to the Gemsmiths' and Silverware Company, and have it made into a claret jug as before. I am giving another wedding present."

(Next month Mr. Gumblay handles with his accustomed skill the romance of a beautiful society girl and an exalted Government official.)

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For "Soldiers and Sailors Too"

All the contributions on this page were sent in by officers and men serving in H.M. Forces. A pack of ROYAL playing-cards or a silver pencil-case is given for every accepted storyette, joke, bit of verse, or drawing sent in by a sailor or soldier. Please say which gift you prefer, and address envelopes to The O.C., ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

"WHERE IGNORANCE IS BLISS——"

MRS. ATKINS (quite unaware that D. C. M. stands sometimes for District Court-Martial): "Oh, Mrs. Brown, I'm so excited. What do you think? My da ling Tom has got a D. C. M. Isn't it perfectly lovely?"

MRS. BROWN (greatly impressed): "My dear!"

MRS. ATKINS: "Yes, and they are going to send him away for three months' holiday!"

THE CREW AND THE CRUET.

Overheard on the mess-deck of a man-of-war at the share-out of Monthly Mess Savings:

CATERER OF MESS: "We are 15s. 6d. in hand; I reck n out of this we might buy a cruet for the benefit of the Mess; it will make things look a bit l·velier."

After a brief silence Nobby Clarke, A.B., said:

"I object to us wastin' our money on things o' that sort. Besides, no one in the M ss can play it."

CONCERNING NANCY.

An old woman in Belfast had a son in the Irish Guards fighting in France. One morning she received a letter from him, and as she could not read she took it to Mrs. M'Carthy next door and asked her to read it for her. This is how it read:

"Dear Mother, just a few lines hoping to find you in the best of health as it leaves me at present. I am about to make a shift for Nancy."

"Don't read no more, Mrs. M'Carthy," the old woman said. "Oh, the wretch! I'll give it to him when he comes home. He could not sew a button on his trousers when he was at home, and now you hear what he is going to do.'

Quit I is in·!

AWKWARDLY PUT.

A rather youthful instructor was standing before his squad endeavouring to give the newly-joined bluejackets their daily dose of physical training, which was always rather resented by them, especially as the orders were punctuated by hackneyed sarcasm, made none the more pleasant coming from whom it did. Great, then, was the delight of the squad when a man in the front rank, who was wearily looking about him, was addressed by the common enemy in the following way:

"Ho, number six! Looking round for a bigger fool than yourself? For heaven's sake, look to your front!"

INTRUDERS.

Two officers of the Egyptian Civilian Police entered a 1st class compartment of one of the Cairo trams, and opening a luncheon basket, commenced a meal.

Shortly after, two British "Tommies" entered and seeing the officers in the middle of their repast, one remarked to the other: "Gawd blimy, Bill, we've come to the H'officers' Mess. Get out!"

SPOIL FROM THE DESERT.

A certain curio-collecting Captain had prevailed upon two privates to move his effects. They managed everything save a weighty packing-case, which defied their united efforts.

As they paused to wipe their heated brows, one asked:

"What the deuce is in it, Bill?"

"The Pyramids," answered Bill promptly.

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THE SICK BAY.

By John S. Margerison.

As most people know, the sick bay is that portion of a ship dedicated to the healing of the ailing members of the crew. The following sketch gives a true and realistic picture of a sick bay—its humour and pathos, its management, and the way in which invalids—real and imaginary—are dealt with by the sympathetic but "not to be hoodwinked" surgeons and attendants.

The atmosphere of the sick bay in His Majesty's battleship *Blusterer* was one of peace—almost perfect peace. There was something about its clean orderliness which attracted, something about its cosiness that was fascinating. Hidden under the forecastle, lit and ventilated by sunny skylights and burnished side scuttles, it was just the ordinary kind of sick bay. It had three rows of beds, stowed in two tiers. Comfortable beds they were, with their quilts bearing the arms of My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. They were hung on pivots, so that when the ship rolled, a fever-racked or broken-legged man should not be cast out roughly upon a hard and unsympathetic deck, though when in harbour their swinging tendencies were sternly repressed by two hooked struts at head and foot.

It was a home from home, this sick bay. Was there not a full-sized bath tub therein, with a steam-heated geyser above it? In passing, this bath tub was not open to patients on Monday evenings, for it was then that Tiny Leng, the sick berth attendant, was wont to practise war economy by washing his personal belongings. Had it not an exclusive and private bookshelf of its own, whereon patients could find stimulating works by Victoria Cross and Elinor Glyn, and a much-thumbed volume of "Pigs in Clover"? They were exceedingly satisfying to the sailormen's love of realism, these books, and though the bookshelf also supported three or four devotional volumes, presented by a "Sailors' Welfare Society" at *Blusterer's* home port, these were dusty and their pages uncut.

Also, eating was somewhat better in the sick bay, for here, instead of basins, quart, regulation, mess, were china cups and saucers, and Tiny Leng had such a happy knack of blending even the most ordinary ingredients into a pudding that seemed like ambrosia itself. And the cushioned settee and the deeply-sprung armchair were beds of down compared with hard deal mess-stools, while the sick bay table actually boasted a white cloth at meal-times.

Also there was a stove—a tiny coal stove—which smoked abominably whenever there was any wind—and most days are windy in the North Sea. But it was a jewel of a stove when compared with the biting winds on deck, with the soaking rain and the clammy mist. And at night Tiny Leng and Patsy Ffloyd made sweet music with mandoline and violin, what time the Chief Sick Berth Steward, one Taff Griffiths, sang favourite songs melodiously, and magnanimously invited the patients to join in the chorus.

Moreover, there was no noise, save when that ever-to-be-hated anchor rattled up and down, or the strident notes of a bugle rang out on the forecastle, and the soft *lap-lap* of the waves lulled one to sleep so soundly—a sleep from which you woke somewhere about seven o'clock, not four, as when on duty.

But there were serpents in this Eden—three in number. Their respective names were operating table, dental chair, and low diet. The two first are familiar; only the third need go through the formality of introduction. It consisted of half-a-pint of milk, heated, with half a slice of bread for breakfast, half-a-pint of meat extract, the same allowance of bread for dinner at noon, and half-a-pint of milk, bread ditto, for tea at four in the afternoon. Men placed upon it for prolonged periods had lost flesh in large quantities; it was a thing hated and shunned. Nevertheless, it had its uses, both as a remedy and a deterrent.

Paddy Doyle, the Irish Staff Surgeon, was as genial a man as ever diagnosed a case, and, according to some of the *Blusterer's* crew, a child in cunning. Jock McNab, his Fleet Surgeon and senior, was rather more difficult, it was acknowledged, but then he had a fund of pawky Scots humour which made up for little failings elsewhere. That they were beloved of the crew is obvious from the fact that they had been nicknamed, as I have shown.

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Occasionally McNab would decree a general muster of the men, by messes, so that none should escape his inspection. He examined their teeth, prescribed "dental chair" where necessary, and searched their bodies for incipient disease. It occasionally happened that some larrigan would be discovered concealing disease, a crime for which the punishment is severe.

"Wash yourself thoroughly," ordered Jock in these cases. "Get your hammock and a canvas screen and rig it on the upper deck. Don't you dare to leave it till I give you permission, or by the Great Hook Block I'll have your messmates sand and canvas you in public. And also you'll see the Skipper for concealing diseases—he'll know what to do with you."

Whereat the larrigan, amid the jeers of his infection-exposed messmates, and not a few sundry kicks and punches, would hurry away and hide himself from sight, for the operation of sand and canvasing is carried out publicly on the upper deck. The patient wears his birthday suit; buckets of sand are tipped on the deck near a tub filled with icy sea water, and with great thoroughness the patient's messmates rub him with wet canvas, plentifully besprinkled with sand, from head to foot. It is a sure remedy for uncleanliness and the concealment of disease. But somehow these patients never saw the Captain—McNab hated suffering, which was why he was a doctor.

It was Paddy Doyle who manipulated the dental chair and its accessories, and if a man put a brave face on the ordeal he had been known to bid the patient: "Go aft to the wardroom and tell the messman to give you a drop of whisky on my account; it'll do you a world of good." On the other hand, a squirmer or a squeaker went through the hoop in proper fashion, and his lacerated feelings were generally torn still further by the Irish surgeon's remarks anent babies and bringing sisters to sea to hold one's hand.

The operating table was a thing they seldom used; they only kept it in the ship in case of emergencies. There was the case of young Philpott, who was crushed by a falling derrick, and who suffered agony with a stiff lip. He hadn't a rib that wasn't smashed; the point of one stuck in his lung, and the operation must be rapid and skilful or he would die. And all the while the chief steward administered anæsthetics and Doyle and McNab cut and sewed with deft and tender fingers, he muttered in his unconsciousness: "I've got the mess money in my cholera belt. Pay the canteen bill with it."

And he died, despite all their skill and attention, before the *Blusterer* made port,

Sand and canvasing is not a pleasant operation, for it is carried on in public, the victim's messmates rubbing him from head to foot with wet canvas plentifully besprinkled with sand.

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though she made a special trip at full speed to land him. And he rests in a little Irish graveyard, mourned by the *Blusterer's* crew and his invalid mother, to whom the three hundred pounds subscribed as a token of esteem and sympathy by the sailormen came as an unlooked-for blessing.

Then there was Morrison, who contracted ophthalmia in South America, and whose eyes had to be irrigated every ten minutes for three weeks. It was Paddy Doyle and Jock McNab who took turns in sitting up with him at nights so that his sight might be saved, and Tiny Leng and Patsy Ffloyd carried it on through the day, till he could see clearly once more, and the inflammation had fled.

Then there was young Batty, who had recently undertaken to keep a wife and a home on fourteen shillings per week. He—big-hearted lad—contracted rheumatic fever through swimming to a wreck with a line, and enabling the rocket apparatus to save some eight hundred men, women, and children. His illness was not, according to red tape, "attributable to service," and if he had been sent to hospital his pay would have automatically ceased on the nineteenth day.

It was McNab who kept him in the ship and ministered to him with all the skill at his command; it was Paddy Doyle who, on Christmas Day, pronounced him on the way to recovery, and asked if he were hungry. Batty said he was, and presently the Irish surgeon brought with his own hands a tray of food from the wardroom. There was fresh salmon cutlet, cooked as only a Frenchman can cook; there was a leg and a bit off the breast of a tender chicken, followed by nectar disguised as a semolina pudding. And with it a small, gold-topped bottle of sunshine water. "Seeing that it's Christmas," said Doyle, "just to cheer you up. And when you've eaten as much as you'll hold you'll go to sleep, and maybe when you wake up about three I'll have a Christmas surprise present for you."

And he had. When Batty opened his eyes his young wife sat by his bedside and wept for joy that she could see her man. She told of payments coming to her regularly, of a mysterious postal-order for a sovereign which reached her every Friday, of a strange letter, which contained a first-class return ticket available on Christmas Day from Portsmouth to Portland, and of a signed pass giving permission to visit H.M.S. *Blusterer* to see a sick husband. And thereafter young Batty got well swiftly, but he never knew whether to thank McNab or Doyle for the splendid tonic his wife's visit had proved. Both were concerned, and both denied knowledge, and, being officers and gentlemen, they couldn't lie.

That is one side of the picture.

There were others who came to the sick bay—"birds," the sailormen called them—the type of men Parliamentary reports term "unemployables," or the man in the street knows as "workshys."

There was Spud Harris, who wandered one evening to the sick bay with "awful pains in the head and stomach, steward," and who, despite the steward's friendly advice and proffered dose of salts, insisted on seeing the doctor. It was coal ship on the morrow, and Doyle, after thoroughly examining the seaman, diagnosed the case as a bad attack of "coal ship fever."

He placed Spud in bed on low diet, and the artful rascal chuckled on the morrow when he heard the coal hoists rumbling and the barrows rolling about over his head. He laughed inwardly when the two sick berth attendants came in coal black, and complimented himself on getting out of much work and much dirt. He anticipated two days in bed at the most, and low diet wouldn't hurt him for that length of time. But the third day came, and Doyle with much solemnity pronounced him worse, and cut down his half-pint of milk and meat extract to a quarter-pint. Every morning the stoker declared himself "Feeling much better, sir. I could go back to duty, I think." Every morning Doyle shook his head and said: "You'd better stay another day," until a full ten days passed, and the *Blusterer* put into harbour to give her crew five days' leave.

The first watch went on leave and returned, and Spud was still in bed on "low"; the return of the second watch found him in like case, but at nine o'clock Doyle came into the bay and asked, as usual, how the patient felt.

Had Spud replied truthfully he would have got seven years' penal servitude for insolence, insubordination, and a host of other sea crimes. He confined himself to his usual statement that he felt better, adding that he was awfully hungry, and could he go off low diet, please? He could, the doctor said, and he could also go back to duty. Spud Harris was handed his attire, and as he donned it he asked Surgeon Doyle whether he stood any chance of getting leave.

"You might next time there is any," replied the Irishman. "We're going to sea again almost immediately."

And rumour has it that Spud Harris bolted from the sick bay, took a whole loaf from the mess breadbarge and half-a-pound of butter from the mess shelf and demolished them without stopping. Also he remained

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out of his hammock as long as possible the next week. He had, he declared, had enough low diet and bed to last him his lifetime; he didn't care if he never saw a sick bay again, and "that dashed Irish doctor was a fiend in human form!"

Then there was Cock Hardy, a lusty stoker, who was subject to bad attacks of rheumatism in his right leg, which, as a rule, came on whenever the *Blusterer* was told off to do a steam trial, which meant slaving and sweating for Cock as for his comrades.

The fleet was to race from the North to the home ports in the South, and the *Blusterer* was a glutton for steam when running at full speed. Also, the Engineer-Commander was a slave-driver and didn't approve of resting. He called it "loafing," which, strictly speaking, was its correct designation.

Stoker Cock Hardy was subject to rheumatism in his right leg whenever steam trials were on, but it stopped miraculously on the day when the surgeon resolved on amputation as the only remedy—a decision that sent Hardy sprinting from sick bay to stokehold in double quick time.

Cock presented himself at the sick bay with his usual "horrible pains whenever I lift my right foot, sir, and I can't bend down without a knife sticking into me." It was McNab this time who interviewed the sufferer and placed him in bed also on "low." It was the Scot who took a paternal interest in the case, who paid the daily visit, and also looked in at the sick bay at night to see how Hardy progressed.

And, in passing, it was McNab who swore he'd have the chief steward disrated if the stoker put so much as a foot outside his bed, or read a book, or received a visit from a sympathising messmate. And the chief steward, having attained his rank after long years of hard work and weary waiting, resolved that Stoker Hardy should not be the cause of his losing the badges he wore and the money he received for them. So he took Hardy's clothing and hid it; he placed the stoker in an upper bed—it nearly killed him to lift his right foot and climb, he said—and left him there. Also, he watched him personally and frustrated all attempts at surreptitious smokes and circumvented various deep-laid schemes for the purchasing of extra grub from the canteen.

Day by day Doctor McNab pronounced the leg to be swelling badly at the back; day by day he assumed his most melancholy

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aspect as he inspected the seat of the pain. You see, H.M.S. *Blusterer* for some good reason had been ordered to stay behind when the fleet went, and the steam trial was postponed pending orders. Therefore, it paid Stoker Hardy to have pains.

The orders came a fortnight later, and the ship put to sea. It was good to lie in bed and listen to the waves racing past, to know that down in the stokeholds men toiled and sweated that she might race through these waves at top speed. But the doctors—both McNab and Doyle—wandered into the sick bay during the morning, and with them came the *Blusterer's* Captain.

Doyle turned back Hardy's bedclothes and exposed the affected leg. The Captain scrutinised it, while Cock's heart sank with the fear that they had seen through his ruse, after all.

"It's bad, certainly bad," said the Captain, and Hardy's heart resumed its normal rate of beating.

"There's only one cure, sir," put in McNab, and his *confrère* agreed. The stoker pricked up his ears.

"And that is?" queried the man of goldlace.

"Amputation, sir," chorused the doctors. "And at once."

"Very well," replied the Captain; "carry on with it. I give my full permission."

Hardy could not believe his ears; they had not asked his permission to operate, and that, he understood, was always done. After the officers departed the chief steward came and washed the leg with ether, making it spotlessly clean. Then he drew a screen round the patient's bed and left him to his own thoughts, refusing to answer any questions.

The clatter of surgical cutlery fell on the patient's ears alarmingly; he could hear the noise of the operating table being rigged. Then there was a smashing sound of glass, and the chief steward gave vent to a loud expletive.

Dinner came, and Hardy missed his meal. "Operation patients don't feed," he was told curtly when he inquired the reason. Still he remained in his bed and waited for what might happen.

Two o'clock, and the doctors came back to the sick bay. Through a rift in the screen Hardy watched them don their white operating gowns, watched the Irishman pick up a saw.

"I say, Griffiths," came the remark to the patient, "this saw's a bit dull, isn't it?"

"It hasn't been sharpened for three years, sir," was the reply, "but it's the best we have." (It wasn't, but no matter.)

"Well, I suppose I shall have to make it do," went on the surgeon. "Got the anæsthetic ready?"

"I dropped the bottle this morning, sir," said the chief steward, "and spilt every blessed drop on the floor. We have none at all in the ship till I draw stores."

"Hard lines on the patient, eh?" laughed McNab. "We shall have to chop his leg off without anything, then. Perhaps he'll bite on a blanket and not cry out."

It was enough—it was too much. With a yell like a lost spirit something white knocked over the screen, dashed like a madman through the sick bay door and down the mess-deck.

And while the doctors, the legitimate patients, and the stewards rolled about, laughing till their ribs ached, Stoker Cock Hardy was diving, in black flannel and fearnaught trousers, down to his place in the stokehold. He seized his shovel and, all trace of rheumatism gone, bent his back and lifted his feet quite painlessly as he shovelled coal into the furnace. The great bluff had succeeded; the Captain had been brought into the plot, and from that day to this Stoker Hardy has never had a return of his attacks of "steam trial rheumatism."

"SEND US THE 'ROYAL'!"

"You can imagine the eagerness with which the magazines from home are perused, especially magazines like the ROYAL, which usually portray some of the most beautiful faces in dear old England."

This is only one of the many appreciative comments of the fighting men who look to the ROYAL to cheer up their dull moments, and to you to see that they get it.

Your part is so simple. Just hand as many copies of the ROYAL as you can collect over the counter at any post-office, without wrapping of any kind, and they will be distributed among the troops to the very best advantage.

Remember Sir Douglas Haig himself wrote to urge all those at home who have been accustomed to buy books and magazines in the past to continue to do so freely, if possible in increasing numbers, and having read and enjoyed them to pass them on as freely for circulation among the troops.

"Tommy's" leisure is often of the spasmodic order, and that's why short stories and brief, breezy articles are the very thing for him. He will fight twice as well if he is in good spirits, so—well, it's up to you, isn't it?

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LIFE WITHOUT LUXURIES.

The Bitterness of War-time Sacrifices Illustrated by Leading Humorous Artists.

By Lesbia Robinson.

"Place for the Porker!"—Mr. Thomas Henry gives us the dejection of the enthusiastic gardener whose roses have to give way to pigs.

Nowadays we are making sacrifices with almost as much industry and determination as we are making munitions. Everybody is sacrificing something—if it is only their complexions or their manners! So far, most of our sacrifices are voluntary, which is all to the good, since there is no virtue in not eating meat you haven't got. Even the pampered flapper has learnt that life is not all chocolate cream and pink ribbon, a fact which is of supreme comfort to those who were her sworn enemies, and who rejoice to feel that she, too, is eating the bread of affliction.

"A Close Crop"—the tragedy of the long-haired artist, touchingly illustrated by Mr. Treyer Evans.

It is a lamentable fact that it is nearly always the pleasant things of life we are called upon to give up. Mackintoshes and sago pudding most of us would never shed a tear over, but it is silk stockings and chocolate cake we are desired to renounce. Even so, there is scope for a good deal of individual taste in our sacrifices. Some people will cheerfully sup off lentils and rice pudding if they may keep their spotless napery and flowers, while others, of more materialistic tendencies, prefer to cut down the laundry bill and still consume the roast beef of Old England.

As a rule, the call for sacrifice presses more heavily on women than on men, since they are bidden to curb their love of pretty things, and this at a time when a large number of them have more money to spend than ever before. It is a trying process to have money for a silk petticoat in your purse and have to rest content with a moirette one, that the Government may have nine-and-sixpence towards a new Dreadnought.

On the other hand, the man entering the Army has to give up a multitude of things to which in civilian life he clung tenaciously. Most men have some little weakness—it may

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"Solving the Transport Question"—Mr. Bertram Prance depicts the energetic citizen who elects to walk to business instead of travelling by train.

be silk socks, a cold bath every morning, or sausages for breakfast on Sunday—but whatever it is, he is not likely to be allowed to indulge it under the merciless eye of a sergeant-major, and amid the limited conveniences of camp or trench life.

It is a regrettable fact that some worthy folks throw commonsense to the winds when it comes to a question of sacrifice. They fail to realise that 16s. 11d. saved by not buying a pair of new shoes may mean a doctor's bill of several guineas, and that it is mistaken economy to go without a holiday if it means spending good gold on Bovril, Burgundy, and other nourishing liquids which shall help to atone for the lack of sea breezes in the summer.

Some people have a fatal instinct for sacrificing necessities instead of luxuries, for giving up the bread and bloaters of life that they may enjoy the chocolate and salmon mayonnaise. They will shiver through an entire winter in tissue paper blouses if by so doing they can purchase silken hosiery, and will count the flesh of the cow well lost so their noses go not unpowdered nor their locks unwaved.

Others, again, have a genius for engineering sacrifices that, while affording them very little inconvenience, make life extremely distasteful to their families. Such a woman was Mrs. Buxom, a lady of excessive bulk and overbearing manner. Mrs. Buxom, owing to her alarming girth, was forbidden to touch sugar; therefore no sugar was allowed within the portals of Hearthstone House, and her family were bidden to consume the fruits of the earth, including rhubarb, without anything to sweeten them.

The rhubarb did it! Thereafter each member of the household sought his bed complaining of violent internal convulsions and demanding hot-water bottles. Mrs. Buxom, little dreaming it was a put-up job, waddled about like an agitated elephant, and was so overcome by the realistic agonies of her eldest son, which he assured her were due to a sugarless diet, that he obtained unconditional surrender. Now all the grocers of the neighbourhood know Mrs. Buxom and flee at her approach, since her baleful glance, as she demands sugar, has a paralysing effect on all but the stoutest hearts.

If the way of the transgressor is hard, so often is that of the virtuous. It was thus with Mr. Mould, a hard-headed city man whose one recreation was golf. Faced with the prospect of empty vegetable tureens, Mr. Mould forsook his clubs and during his week-ends became an industrious tiller of the soil. He did not enjoy it; he yearned in spirit for the breezy golf-courses and his chosen cronies, but he persevered manfully and soon began to take an unwilling pride in the development of his peas and beans.

And then, just when he was beginning to reap the reward of his labours, there was a Zeppelin raid, and an unmannerly German planted a couple of bombs neatly in the midst of his cherished vegetable patch. The fact that he and his family had

"The Tragedy of Trousers"—the affecting sacrifice of the girl who works on the land, portrayed by Mr. Cottington Taylor.

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had a merciful escape did not weigh with him; he had forsaken the golf-club for the spade and hoe, and behold! the sacrifice was futile. Wherefore the iron entered into his soul, and he now shuns the garden, and spends his week-ends smiting the elusive golf ball as of yore.

The conscientious housewife, who wishes to keep the appetites of her family within bounds, must be prepared to sacrifice not only time and popularity, but her peace of mind. This is what occurred with Mrs. Coyly, a married lady of the best intentions but hazy ideas about arithmetic. From the first she took a firm stand with regard to rationing, and made the lives of her husband and son a burden to them by her rigorous cross-examination as to the exact quantity of meat and bread they had devoured at their midday meal in town. The scales in the kitchen were in constant requisition, and scraps of paper, covered with frenzied figures, haunted her waking hours.

At the end of the first week her husband, returning to rest from his labours, was met by an excited wife obviously bursting to communicate tidings of importance.

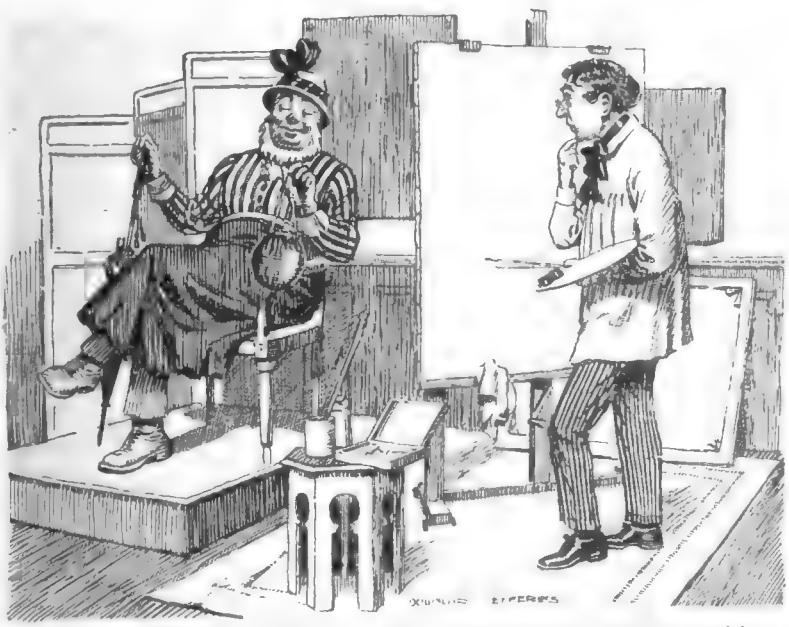
"Oh, Raymond!" she exclaimed. "I've just been making up the accounts; it's ridiculous for you to say the allowance is insufficient. We're nearly five pounds under in meat, and seven-and-a-half pounds in bread. And you said it couldn't be done!"

"I'd like to see the accounts," was her husband's unfeeling comment. "You haven't made a mistake, and reckoned one hundred and forty-four ounces to the pound or anything of that sort, I suppose?"

"Of course not," returned his wife in aggrieved tones. "I may not be a mathematician, but I do know that there are twenty-four ounces in a pound."

And not until her husband produced a table of weights and measures was Mrs. Coyly convinced of her mistake. Now she has given up all attempts at rationing, and her husband's evenings are no longer punctuated by appeals as to the probable weight of two sausages, or queries as to whether chicken and ham paste can rightly be ranked as meat. So that there is peace in the house of Coyly, and if plenty also prevails, well—we are not all born mathematicians, and avoirdupois weight is extremely confusing.

Mr. Reg. F. Smith shows us the grief of the patriotic man who sacrifices his sweet tooth for the sake of King and country.



"A Poor Imitation"—the plight of the harassed artist who, deprived of his female model, resorts to a masculine substitute, strikingly depicted by Mr. Douglas Jefferies.

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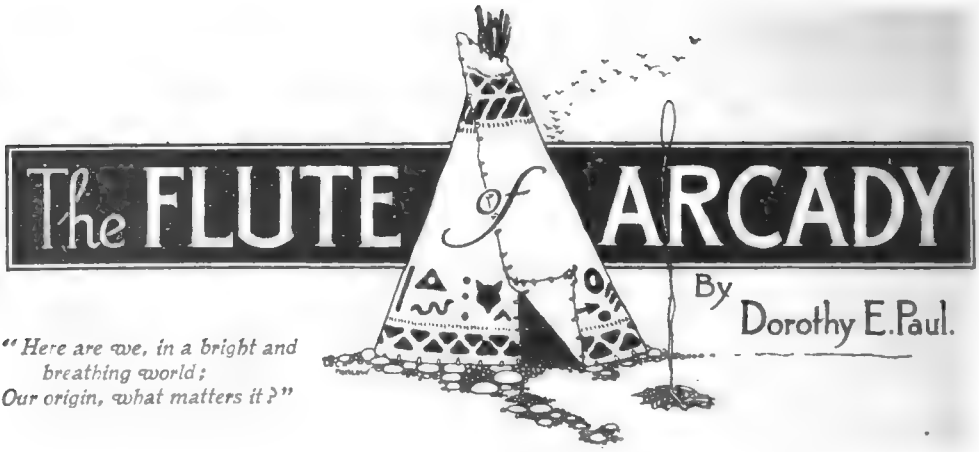

"Here are we, in a bright and breathing world;
Our origin, what matters it?"

It nestled, sheltered from the storms of winter and the shrieking winds of the barren grounds, in a valley of the Upper Fraser.

Pine, larch, cedar, and maple mingled with the sweeping grace of willow and hemlock; spruce clothed the hillside with an ever-verdant garment, patterned with brilliant-coloured flowers, the varied beauties of which would have caused even a traveller from the tropics to exclaim with delight. During the long days of summer insects danced in the sun, and the harlequin duck in its rainbow flight skimmed the surface of the stream which bubbled its way through the valley. Men said it rivalled the Santa Clara—and they called it Arcady.

In a small one-storied wooden house at the end of the dusty road which ran between a row of similar wooden houses, the collection of which was dignified by the name of "village," a girl was washing dishes.

There was a poise about her straight young form which would have attracted more than passing attention. Her skin, beneath the sun tan, was fair, and she had blue eyes, but there was something about the narrowness of the latter, the moulding of her cheek bones, and a certain coarseness of the black, smoothly-parted hair that suggested it was not all white blood which flowed in the veins that showed so plainly beneath the delicate skin.

Above the twittering of the birds from the woodland, louder than the bubbling of the stream as it twinkled by, came the clear, silvery notes of a flute.

The girl laid the dishes aside and stood hesitating a moment, biting at her lips, then, sending the dish-rag flying, she crossed the room to the square-paned window and opened it.

The notes of the flute sounded distinct and very near.

Cautiously the girl thrust out her head and, apparently, her eyes alighted at once on what she had expected to see, for the next instant she bobbed back into the room with a rosy colour in her cheeks. The music ceased simultaneously, and a moment later a brown hand shot up and caught hers as it rested on the ledge.

She protested.

"Cultus! Go away!" she cried in a nervous, but not at all an angry voice, while she tried to free her hand.

But the brown fingers held hers in a tight grip, so that presently she leant out of the window again and looked into the keen, bronzed face of an Indian.

Save for the fringed trousers and the mocassins on his feet, he was devoid of clothing, and his skin in the warm sunlight gleamed a rich red-brown. His eyes stared up at her through his black elf locks.

"Go away, Cultus!" cried the girl again.

"Why—away?" asked the Indian, without moving.

"Well, because father will be back any moment, and—and he'll be angry."

"Maybe—so," came the imperturbable reply.

"But he'll be angry with *me*. He says—" she stopped and fidgeted beneath his direct gaze.

"He angry. Yes." The Indian nodded slowly. "But I offer fifty skins for you."

"Fifty skins!" exclaimed the girl, half amused, half annoyed.

"Enough for any squaw," replied the man.

"But I'm *not* a squaw, and my father doesn't drive bargains of that kind for me. Besides he—Cultus," she leant further out of the window, "Cultus, *I'm white*," she said.

The merest shadow of a smile flickered for an instant on the Indian's lips, but the

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expression in his unwavering glance did not change. The girl's eyes fell, and a stormy colour swept into her cheeks. Quickly she snatched her hand away, withdrew her head, and slammed the window.

With the blade of his hunting-knife the Indian calmly prised it open and poked his head into the room.

"Fifty skins--enough! Your father get many dollar for you, maybe. White man he wants all—for nothing. His way! See?"

The crimson still suffused the girl's face, and this time anger increased it.

"Go away!" she cried, stamping her foot, then, catching the window by its clasp, she banged and fastened it.

The Indian placed the flute between his lips, and without the slightest pretence of hurrying, walked over the clearing, crossed the stream, and disappeared between the willows that bent down to kiss the sparkling water.

At the other end of the dusty street, two men sat on a bench outside the Arcady saloon. They lolled indolently enough, with their hats perched well over their noses to shade their eyes from the sun. They were, in spite of the lazy look about them, engaged in earnest conversation. That is to say, one spoke, the other mostly listened.

"Tell you," the elder of the two was saying, "Lisbeth Mary will be rich. *Rich!* Gosh, ten thousand dollars I'll settle on her the day she's married; sure's I'm a livin man I will. Then, when I hook it, there'll be the other little lot, but what that is don't come into this yer conversation, though, mind you, it isn't to be sneezed at, not by a long chalk. The gal and ten thousand dollars thrown in."

"Perhaps not," answered the other, thrusting his hands deeper into his pocket and seeming to stick all the closer to the bench.

"She can sing like a lark, walk like a queen, and, what's better than all that, she's the finest little cook you ever came across in all your trail. I'm a-going to take her down to Seattle, and then on to some other of the large cities and let her see things. I'm a-going to make a real white lady of her."

Upon receiving no reply from his companion, he continued in a musing tone, as though conversing with himself:

"Suppose I've kind of wronged her where her mother was concerned. But then we all make mistakes, and—and when I made the mistake I did, it was 'cause I wanted company—woman's company. She didn't serve me so badly either—the old squaw. But there, Lisbeth Mary's forgotten all about her. She and I were left when she was only three. She don't know much about it, most like she's forgotten completely. 'Sides, I don't allow her to have no dealings with the Indians."

"She don't know anything about it?" inquired his companion.

The elder man shifted uneasily in his seat. He thought for a moment whether it would be more advantageous to tell the truth or to lie. For future reasons he decided to be truthful.

"She *do* know, of course," he said. "She kind of found out by accident like."

"And how did she take it?" asked the other drily.

"Take it? Oh, well, gals is queer; 'I don't mind,' that's what she said, just like that, blow me if she didn't!"

The other man pursed up his lips, jingled the few cents in his pocket, thought of his very strict but penniless relatives in Spokane—and then rose to his feet.

"Guess I'll have another look at her," he said.

The consequence was he had several looks, and came again and again to the little wooden house at the further end of the dusty road where the stream twinkled by. The girl was beautiful, and, really, one could hardly tell; besides, there were the ten thousand dollars, and more to come when the old squaw-man pegged out.

Eventually, though at the same time feeling it a great concession on his part—for, after all, he was taking a certain amount of risk as a little drop of odd blood is likely to crop up at any time—he offered himself in marriage to Lisbeth Mary.

Lisbeth Mary, urged on by her father, whom she always obeyed implicitly, besides not quite understanding things, agreed to accept the suit, though she wondered why it was that she ought to consider herself lucky, for so her father assured her she should.

"That's a good gal," he said, with a note of relief in his voice; "he'll make you a dandy husband, and you're a lucky gal to get him."

"I wonder why?" she said, partly to herself, and then aloud to her father she added: "Does he know?"

"Know what?" He shifted his gaze.

"About—me."

"There ain't nothing to know; at least, nothing that counts. See here, Lisbeth, you're white, remember that, and don't you go shaming your old father with any talk, or even thoughts, about your squaw mother. You're white, my gal, and I'm going to take you to Seattle soon, and to lots of other

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cities. I'm going to spend a heap of money on you. I shan't grudge it, 'cause you're worth it. You'll see things you've never seen afore—tramcars, railway trains, theatres, shops with hats and fallals in—and they'll make you forget all this—this woodland and wildness and—the Injuns. You'll forget."

"Shall I?" the girl answered; she spoke absently, for she was trying to catch the distant notes of a flute.

"Will you, won't you, why now don't you?" cried her father irritably. "'Course you will! Be a good gal now and don't be so dratted awkward. Time you was in bed, too. Early hours for the cheek roses, you know, and you mustn't lose them afore you're wed!" He spoke jocularly, kissing her on her forehead.

He need not have feared for her roses had he seen her when she reached her tiny bedroom beneath the roof. She threw the window wide and peeped out. Although it was night time by the clock, the long, long hours of northern daylight had not quite faded; there was a clear dusk and all was very still. The Indian stood beneath the shadow of the willows across the stream. He raised an arm to signify he had seen her; the girl made no sign, only remained looking out.

"Squaw!" he called very softly, but so clearly that his voice reached her, whereat she closed the window at once. She threw herself on the bed and buried her glowing cheeks in the pillow as though trying to blot out the sound of the voice that came to her from under the shadow of the trees.

A few days later Lisbeth Mary and her father prepared to leave Arcady for Seattle. They were to visit the different cities until the following spring, and then they were to go to Spokane, the home of the bridegroom-to-be, and there Lisbeth Mary, her education completed, would be married.

Very early in the morning on the day of the departure, the girl cautiously let herself out of the little wooden house, and, crossing the stream, made her way into the woods.

The trees, dew-laden, drenched her with a sweet shower-bath. Birds twittered as she approached.

Walking quickly, she came at last to where a row of tall pines formed a grove, bordered on either side with hemlock and spruce. Tucked away in a sheltered spot between the pines was a wigwam, and before this, a little breathless, a little uncertain and half fearful, and impelled by some power which she did not wholly understand, Lisbeth Mary stopped.

The Indian had heard her coming, and as she stood before him he gazed up at her calmly.

"Cultus!" she said, breaking the silence, "I'm going away."

"You come back," he answered.

She shook her head.

"No," she replied, "I'm going away for always. I'm going to Seattle and to all the large cities. I shall see a lot of wonderful things, Cultus, things I have never seen before, and I shall be amongst my own people—white people—like I am. Then, in the spring, I'm getting married—to a white man."

An inscrutable something flickered in the Indian's eyes; it vanished the next instant, and she could not tell whether the expression had been one of grief or mockery.

"You go maybe—so," he said. "But you come back."

"No!" she cried again. "Don't you understand? I'm going for ever. I'm to be married! Married, Cultus!".

The Indian nodded gravely.

"You marry maybe—so, but you come back!"

She was baffled and angry at his calm positiveness. Tears of mortification stood in her eyes. Then the Indian arose, caught her, and held her in a grasp that was painful.

"Cultus always here. You his squaw," he said.

"*Your* squaw! *I?*" Her white blood rose in revolt at the sudden roughness of his wooing. "I your squaw. *Never!*"

"Unwilling woman — best squaw," he answered, but there was no tenderness in his voice, only the fierce, keen joy of certainty.

She tore herself away. Quickly she ran back down the woodland path. She was angry and sore in spirit. The sensitiveness of her father's blood rebelled for once against the conditions. No matter, she thought angrily, she would be leaving it all in a few hours, never to return. She would be amongst her own people—and would forget.

In Seattle and the other cities Lisbeth Mary delighted, though somewhat startled her father at the rapid progress she made towards becoming a "real white lady," and her seemingly complete transformation from a backwoods girl into a smart young woman.

He was proud of her and did not stint her in money, and, so far from refusing, he broke into a loud chuckle when she expressed a desire to visit Europe.

"No time for that now, gal," he said, "though I guess we'll fix it up for you later. How about arranging it for a honeymoon trip, eh?"

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Lisbeth Mary experienced a shock. It was the first time her approaching marriage had been mentioned, and so engrossed had she been with the interests of her surroundings that it had been pushed so far back in her mind as to be almost forgotten. Now it faced her, and with it the realisation that soon she was to go to Spokane and meet once more her husband-to-be.

As the time approached for her marriage she was seized with a great unwillingness which amounted to a dread. Often, so intense was her dislike regarding it, she was tempted to ask her father if it need take place, but one glance at his face, a little grim, a little hard and wholly unsympathetic, told her that such a request would be futile.

To keep these unpleasant thoughts out of her mind as much as possible she threw herself more violently into social gaiety, so that when she arrived in Spokane, so entirely altered was she, the man she was to marry hardly recognised her.

As far as he viewed it, the transformation was for the better. Somehow, he didn't think quite so much about the ten thousand dollars, and there were times when he believed he would have taken her without a cent, so beautiful she was, and so sincerely did he want her.

He suggested that the wedding might be hastened, but Lisbeth Mary objected; so did her father.

There was one factor in all their plans that had not been reckoned with, not even by the girl herself, and that was the coming of spring!

With the coming of spring something in the blood of Lisbeth Mary stirred. She suddenly grew very tired of the noise and dust of the city. The places of amusement stifled her, and she found herself wishing only to be somewhere in an open space, somewhere where there were trees with the sun shining through the branches. Where she had once been so eager to see everything and go everywhere, she now only wanted to be out in the open, and there, as long as she dared, she would sit—and dream.

Her father made light of this sudden "awkwardness" on her part.

"Did you ever see a love sick gal as didn't want to go mooning about on the quiet?" he asked, and his future son-in-law, not caring about anything as long as she became his, fell in with this explanation, though he made it an excuse for urging forward the marriage.

But the more Lisbeth Mary thought of the ceremony the stronger became her dread of it. She felt she hated this man who claimed the right to caress and kiss her when he chose, and she loathed the touch of his somewhat plump white hands. Mentally she would compare them with other hands, thin brown ones, and she would flush guiltily. She viewed him in his rather tightly-fitting town clothes with disfavour and disliked him intensely for his evident self-satisfaction, his conventionality, his utter intolerance towards those he considered his inferior in any way. There were times, too, when she disliked her own clothes, and longed to get out of the smart frocks and slip into the grey-brown homespun. Once she unearthed the latter from the bottom of her trunk and put it on. This was in the privacy of her room, but it was the happiest hour she had known for many days.

The climax came at last.

There passed them one day in the street a woman with two children. She was handsome, and there was nothing about her to denote that she was otherwise than what she looked, only the children were undoubtedly half breeds.

"There," said the friend who was with them, "goes a woman who could walk on carpets made of dollars if she'd liked. She was the wife of Hiram P. Hanna. Guess you've heard of him and his money? Thought so! You see her, and you see those kids? Oh, they're Hiram's right enough, but it tells a tale, don't it? Hiram P. he couldn't stand it nohow. He was quite fair, told the woman to choose between him and the children. She made her choice as you see. Queer things, women!"

"Must have been stark staring mad!" said the prospective son-in-law.

But Lisbeth Mary was silent, only her face took on a curiously stubborn expression.

That evening, while dressing to attend some social function, the temptation to don the grey-brown homespun became too strong for her to resist. She slipped it on—it would be but for a moment, she reflected; but the seconds flew on to minutes as she smoothed the dress with loving fingers, sniffing at it delightedly as though from it emanated some subtle scent suggesting the outdoor world.

As her soul dreamt her eyes failed to notice to what hour the hands of her watch pointed, and when there came a sudden rap upon her door she only partially realised her surroundings.

The squaw-man, attended by his future son-in-law, growing weary of waiting, had knocked, and, receiving no answer, forgot his manners in his impatience, opened the door and looked in. His sharp eyes understood the situation at a glance.

"Why ain't you dressin' 'stead of foolin' about?" he demanded roughly, hoping that the man behind who was peeping over his

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shoulder could not see how his daughter was engaged.

But the wooer of Lisbeth Mary had seen, and in his curiosity to observe more he edged the other man into the room. He looked admiringly at the beautiful picture the girl made with her flushed face and untidy black hair, but he scowled when he noticed the dress she wore.

"You're not going to keep that on, are you?" he asked. "Put on that nice yellow dress that shows your pretty neck and shoulders."

The girl's usually tranquil eyes flashed. She hated the tone of ownership which this man adopted, and always she had bitterly resented the fact that not only did he openly admire her, but that he had no objection to the eyes of other men resting approvingly on her beauty.

"No, I will not," she answered sullenly.

"Enough of that," broke in her father. "Take off that rag at once!"

"I will not," cried the girl, a hard ring of defiance in her voice.

The eyes of parent and daughter met squarely. Never before had the girl disobeyed her father, and it left her panting and white-lipped. He, his mouth twisted grimly, glared up at her from beneath his brows. He would give her another chance.

"Off with it!" he growled in a warning voice.

"No!"

Then the father of Lisbeth Mary raised his arm and dealt the girl a blow which sent her reeling. He imagined he had to reckon only with the red blood in her, and that was the right and proper way to treat a rebellious squaw.

But no sooner had he struck her than he fell to the floor beneath the fist of his prospective son-in-law.

"You brute! Touch her again if you dare!" cried the latter, but it was because the beauty he coveted might be harmed that he turned in defence of the girl, and his action cost him what little favour he had in her eyes. Although her pride revolted at her father's violence, yet she realised that he had a right to punish her disobedience in any way he chose, and in interfering the other had only made himself ridiculous.

Ridicule is the last thing an Indian will endure, and the pagan in the girl refused utterly to allow her to link herself with a man she despised.

"You've lost them dollars!" snarled the squaw-man, rising to his feet.

"Keep them! I'll take the girl without a cent!" retorted the other unguardedly.

The lips of Lisbeth Mary curled with scorn. She saw now the marriage in its true light.

"I see," she cried in a low voice, turning bitterly shamed eyes upon the man. "I am not good enough for you to marry without. Other women have been sold and bought, even that is too good for me, and my father gives me away with a bribe of dollars to a man I loathe and despise!"

"Lisbeth! Lisbeth!" broke in her wooer. "I want nothing with you—nothing! I love you, girl, and want you for that reason alone. But if you have a price, name it. Name it, Lisbeth Mary!"

She looked into his eager, desiring face, then laughed softly.

"My price is fifty skins!" she said.

Memory stirred the old squaw-man. He swore violently, and raised his arm to strike, but the other interfered again and hustled him from the room.

"I told him fifty skins," she whispered to herself when they had gone, "but my price is nothing when I love."

A few days later, wearing her plainest hat and her oldest shoes, both of which, however, looked oddly smart and out of place with the grey-brown homespun dress, Lisbeth Mary returned to the woodlands.

She walked quickly up the dusty road, and the lazily curious eyes of the folk of Arcola watched her as she passed.

The rivulet, swollen now by the spring thaw, tumbled tumultuously, giving the willows as they bent to meet it a rough caress as it tore by.

She did not stay to look at the wooden house which had once been her home, but crossed the stream and turned into the woods.

As she approached the grove of pines she walked more cautiously, then, when she was screened from view, she peeped out with expectant eyes for the wigwam that had been there.

The place was empty.

The heart of Lisbeth Mary was turned to stone. She stepped from her hiding-place to search the spot more thoroughly. Something on the ground caught her eye. Kneeling, she examined it. It was the remains of a pile of ashes from a fire that had been kindled many months before, the embers of which, screened from the wind, had not been entirely scattered.

The discovery caused the hot blood to run riot in her cheeks, and she gave a half-choked exclamation of joy. She understood the meaning of the pile of ashes, and that, according to the custom of his kind to signify grief at the death or departure of one dearly cherished, the Indian had burnt the

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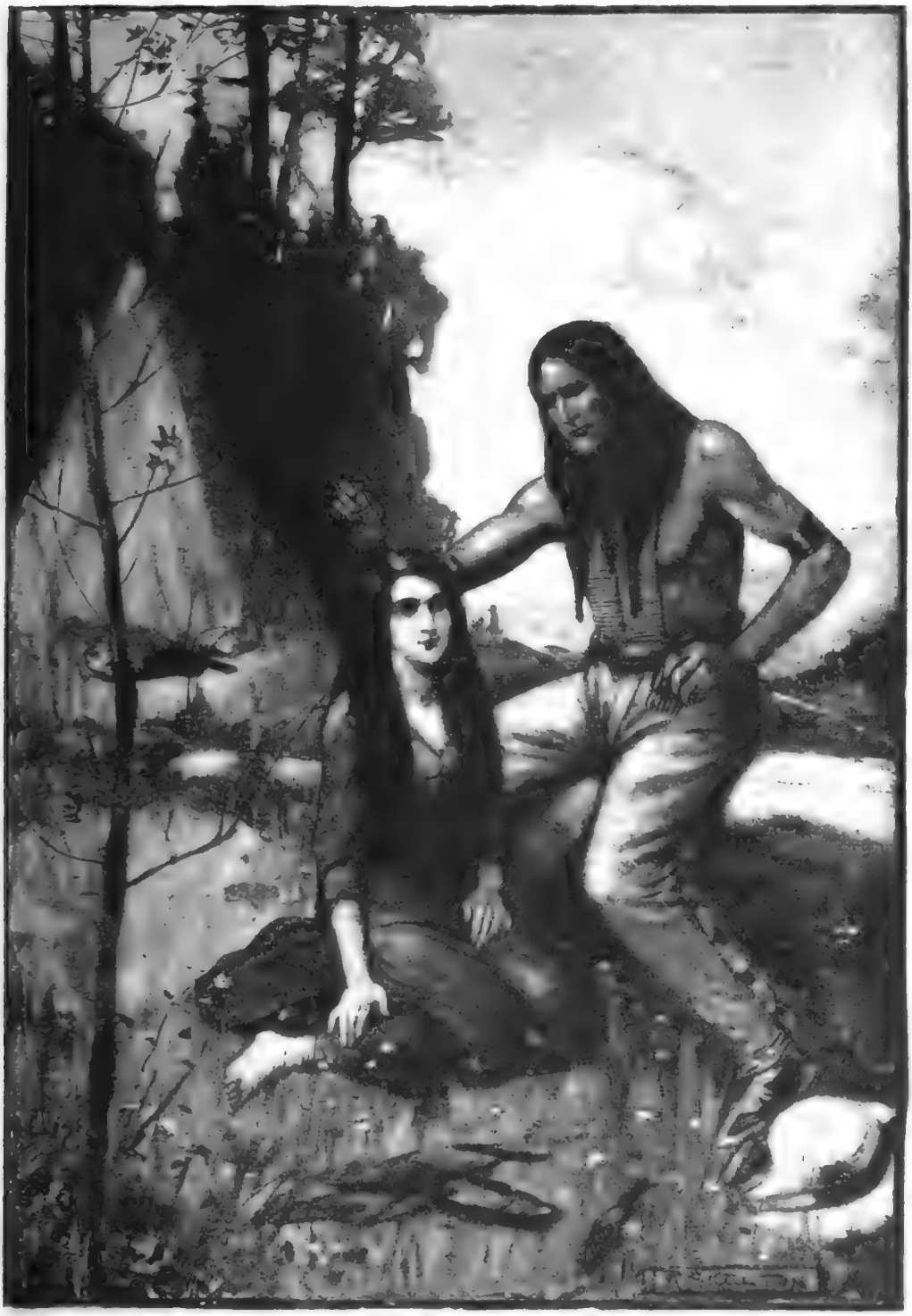

He unlaced the smart town shoes that she wore and took them off, drawing the stockings with them. He removed the hat, and his brown fingers twined for a moment in her hair; unresisting she let him draw out the combs which held it up, and it fell about her in its dense blackness. [*Page* 102, *col.* 2.]

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wigwam and had taken up his abode elsewhere.

On through the woods went Lisbeth Mary, a little breathless now, for the ground inclined steeply as the summit of the hill was gained.

She had no idea where she would find the man she sought. She only knew that instinct would guide her footsteps in the right direction, and when she emerged from the tangled woodland at the top of the hill she found him.

He was seated on some fallen timber, his back towards her, silhouetted against the sky. Lisbeth Mary's hands flew to her breast as though to stay the too rapid beating of her heart.

He was very still. Near him was a new tepee, and on the ground were the household gods, the hunting-knife, the gun, the skins, and the great bear rug. Lisbeth Mary noted all this with a glad remembrance. Softly she stole over the grass towards him. He did not move, and his listless attitude denoted a deep dejection and a self-control for once absent.

The girl's footsteps were so noiseless that, keen as the ears of the red man were, he did not know of her coming, and perhaps it was only intuition told him of her presence.

Sharply he turned and looked at her.

"Cultus!" she cried softly.

She stood a moment; then at a gesture from him she sat down at his feet.

Still silent, the Indian looked at her, and beneath his gaze she began to tremble with a kind of delicious joy.

Presently he leant towards her, touched the dress of grey-brown homespun with approving fingers. But he unlaced the smart town shoes that she wore and took them off, drawing the stockings with them. He removed the hat, and his brown fingers twined for a moment in her hair; unresistingly she let him draw out the combs which held it up, and it fell about her in its dense blackness.

"Braid it!" he said, speaking for the first time.

She obeyed him, doing it into two thick plaits, parting it with her comb, and smoothing it afterwards with her hands.

A sudden flame leapt into the red man's eyes. He caught her by the shoulders with a strong, rough grasp, drawing her nearer, and laying his face against hers.

"Squaw?" he said.

She did not speak, but he found his answer in the look of utter contentment in her eyes.

Cheek to cheek, in silence, they remained, until, leaving a wide crimson streak in a sky of orange and gold, the sun sank behind the hills on the far horizon.

Then the Indian arose. He took up the gun, placed the flute between his lips, and walked slowly towards the woodland.

Lisbeth Mary picked up the tepee, the skins, the great bear rug, and all the household gods, and strapped them across her back. Then, barefooted and bareheaded, she walked behind, following her lord, her master, down into the valley of Arcady.

GRAN'MA.

All the people in our house is grown up 'cept one;
All the folks is far too old to 'member having fun.
All except my Gran'ma; but *she* understands my plays;
Never purses up her lips or scolds at "children's ways."

Nurse, *she* can't remember times when she was very small,
Sometimes thinks I'll like the things I don't enjoy at all;
That's because she's far too old to 'member, don't you see,
All the things she used to do when she was very wee?

Gran'ma can remember what she did when she was small;
Gran'ma didn't like, she says, to go to bed at all;
Gran'ma likes to hear the tales I make up in my head;
Gran'ma never bustles round—she stays by me instead.

In my heart right deep, deep down, I've got a secret hid;
Fairies made my Gran'ma—yes, I'm certain that they did;
Though the others think she's old, she really—do you know?—
Comes the next to *me* in age!—the fairies told me so.

Ethel Talbot.

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DEFYING THE DUCHESS.

By E. Newton Bungey.

"He is master and lord of his brothers
Who is worthier and wiser than they."

The Reverend Richard Carrington lit his pipe and gazed through the window of his study, which afforded a delightful view of Little Deeping Church, with its tall, ivy-covered tower and flying buttresses.

It was a delightful view, but the Vicar sighed. This was his third day as Vicar of Little Deeping, and already the enthusiasm he had brought with him had been damped.

In Little Deeping, as in many country towns, people did as their fathers and grandfathers had done before them. The church had been good enough for many generations of Little Deepingites, and the new Vicar's proposal for an immediate restoration scheme had been regarded with mingled surprise and hostility, with a dash of resentment thrown in.

And there was always the Duchess!

During the three days Richard Carrington had been Vicar of Little Deeping he calculated that he had heard the Duchess referred to at least two thousand times. Apparently her Grace was the orbit around which the inhabitants of Little Deeping and district revolved.

The Vicar's thoughts were disturbed by his elderly housekeeper, who announced that the two wardens and their wives were in the sitting-room waiting to see him.

When the Reverend Richard Carrington entered his sitting-room and gazed at his visitors he suddenly felt as though he was just seven years old. Four pairs of eyes were fixed on him. Two pairs peered out of large and hairy faces, the other two pairs were masked by the shadow of broad-brimmed hats, but they were none the less deadly.

"Good evening!" chorused the visitors.

"Now that you're settled in, Mr. Carrington," said Mr. Broadbent, the people's warden, "we thought it time to come round and talk things over."

"Of course, Mr. Parker, our late Vicar, left the parish mostly in the hands of myself and my colleague," announced Mr. Glover, the Vicar's warden.

"You will have a hard job to fill his place, Mr. Carrington," said Mrs. Broadbent mournfully. "He was such a nice man."

"Now about that restoration idea of yours," said Mr. Broadbent, as it was apparently his turn. "It's out of the question."

"Quite!" exclaimed Mr. Glover. "Her Grace does not approve of it."

"Mr. Parker never dreamt of restoration," said Mr. Broadbent.

"He was such a nice man," remarked Mrs. Glover.

The Vicar looked up sharply. "It is very kind of you to have called on me," he said, "and I appreciate your desire to help me and work with me. But I assure you that unless you want the church to fall into decay something will have to be done in the way of restoration.

"There are cracks in the tower and leaks in the roof," the Vicar continued. "At the east end dry-rot has set in in some of the timbers. The chancel floor has sunk, showing that the foundations have given way somewhere. Altogether, if we want to keep the church standing it must be restored."

His visitors tried to answer him all at the same time, but there was one common note in the concerto, and that was "her Grace." Each speaker dragged in the Duchess. Furthermore, each reply, though differently expressed, was in hostility to the Vicar's views.

Dick Carrington swallowed the feeling of annoyance that had welled up within him, and he smiled at his visitors. He looked very attractive when he smiled, but, unfortunately, he looked still younger.

"We will put the subject on one side for the present," he said. "Let me ask you some other questions about the parish."

There was a note of authority in his voice which his callers resented, but neither of them seemed to have sufficient initiative to commence another offensive.

"Upon my word!" exclaimed the Vicar when his visitors had gone. "I can see

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troubled times ahead. But I'm going to have my church restored even if a dozen duchesses object. It's like being ten points down in the first five minutes," he murmured, his thoughts flying back to Cambridge, where he had been a Rugger "Blue" not so very long ago.

He refilled his pipe and sat by the study window again, gazing at the church until its stately outline grew blurred in the gathering darkness.

Next morning he was to take his first service at Little Deeping, and a large congregation assembled. The vestries were at the west end of the church, and the service was commenced by a hymn sung as the choir filed up the aisle to the chancel.

Dick Carrington stood behind the choristers at eleven o'clock, waiting for the lady organist to commence the hymn, but she still continued the voluntary.

"Hasn't she a watch?" asked the Vicar, addressing the village baker, who sang a mighty bass.

"Yes, sir," was the reply, "but the Duchess ain't come yet, sir."

The Vicar blinked and rubbed his chin thoughtfully. Then the clatter of high heels was heard, and shortly afterwards the organist commenced the hymn.

As he stood in the chancel whilst the last verses of the hymn were sung, Dick Carrington picked out the Duchess. It would have been difficult to miss her. She sat in the front pew beneath the pulpit, a mass of furs, with a sharp-featured face peeping out of them. The gaze of her bright little eyes, deep sunk above a slightly hooked, high-bridged nose, fastened on the Vicar until he felt as though they were a couple of gimlets boring into his mind.

But he forgot them as he saw another pair of eyes. They belonged to the girl who sat with the Duchess. The Vicar was not sure whether they were grey or blue, nor could he decide whether her face was beautiful or just attractive. But the girl affected him strangely, and only by an effort did he avert his gaze.

His study of the two ladies had not lasted more than four seconds, but he had the uneasy feeling that he had been staring at them.

The Vicar's first sermon was not a brilliant effort of oratory; it was merely a simple talk on man's duty to man. It disappointed some and pleased others. The Duchess sat on the fence, though she only did it metaphorically, of course. She realised instantly that there was considerable strength of character in the new Vicar.

As he left the church Dick Carrington found the Duchess attended by a worshipping court, consisting of the wardens and their wives, but she turned from them directly he appeared.

"How do you do, Mr. Carrington?" she said briskly. "I am the Duchess of Downshire, and this is my companion, Miss Sylvester."

The Vicar bowed.

"You are a young man to follow Mr. Parker," continued the Duchess, "a very young man."

"It is a fault I shall grow out of, your Grace," responded the Vicar gravely.

The Duchess' eyes twinkled for a moment, and then she nodded and moved away.

"You must come and see me sometimes, Mr. Carrington," she said.

Miss Sylvester's eyes were grey, but almost blue, the Vicar decided, as he bowed to her on her departure. They were very nice eyes.

"Such a charming woman," sighed Mrs. Glover. "Don't you think so, Vicar?"

"Yes," he replied, but he was not thinking of the Duchess.

Evensong commenced promptly at half-past six, for her Grace was only present at matins.

During the following week Dick Carrington wrote to a Cambridge friend, who was now by way of becoming one of the leading architects of the day, asking him to pay a visit to Little Deeping.

And during that same week the Vicar met Mary Sylvester on three separate occasions, and each time he walked some little distance with her and found quite a lot to say to her. The architect came down for the week-end, inspected the church, and said restoration was absolutely necessary and should be commenced at once. He stated that the cost would not be far short of £1000, but it would not be more.

Before morning service on the second Sunday the Vicar saw the organist.

"Will you please remember that I like service to commence punctually at eleven?" he said.

Nevertheless, it was four minutes past eleven before the organist commenced to play the opening hymn, for she had waited for the Duchess.

The Vicar's sermon that morning dealt with the church as a building. It was the opening of the public campaign to raise funds for the restoration.

"Supposing any of you were going to have the honour of receiving royalty at your homes," he said. "What would you do? You would have your visitor shown into your best room and you would have taken

["DEFYING THE DUCHESS" continued overleaf.]

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TOILET ECONOMY.

By MIMOSA.

My advice to smart women, who demand the very best results, is to let most toilet preparations alone. When facial applications are necessary, get only the pure ingredients just as they come to the chemist himself. I will tell you in this column from time to time, just what to get and just how to use it. Do not be persuaded into buying some cheap toilet preparation instead. Any chemist can supply you with genuine original concentrated ingredients, if he will, and I know that most firms make a speciality of supplying all kinds of pure ingredients neat, both direct and by post. I can point out to you, however, many useful hints, which involve no expense at all.

"To Acquire Plumpness."—The very best thing I can recommend is to acquire the "milk habit." Drink at least a quart of creamy milk every day, and you will soon fill out those scraggy lines. A few coconoids might help. Chemists supply these.

"Care of the Hair."—Your hair needs the right kind of shampoo to bring back that softness and lustre. Get about two ounces of stallax from your chemist, and dissolve a teaspoonful only in a cup of hot water. This is plenty for each shampoo. After a shampoo rub a little boranium lotion into the roots of the hair. It is a remarkable tonic and hair stimulant. You can make it by mixing an ounce of boranium in a quarter pint of bay rum.

"Brittle Finger Nails."—Eating raisins freely every day will soon put your nails right again.

"Superfluous Hair."—There is nothing so unsightly. Get an ounce of powdered pheminol and apply a little directly to the hair, which will quickly shrivel up, fall away and leave no trace behind. It is quite painless.

"Slaves to Powder."—Face powders are not very satisfactory. You will find a solution of cleminite all that you demand. Dissolve an ounce in four ounces of water, and apply a little of this to the face in the morning, rubbing gently in till dry. There will be no more "greasy skin," and the effect lasts for many hours even in a hot sun. Many ladies have discarded face powders entirely, and use this method only. It saves much trouble and defies detection.

"Don't Use Rouge."—If you really must have colour, just touch the cheeks with powdered colliandum, and you will be delighted with the change. It is quite harmless. It produces the hue of perfect health exactly, and is not obvious like a rouge.

"Face Peeling."—Yes, you can do it yourself at home, if you wish. Get an ounce or two of mercolised wax and apply it nightly like cold cream. Wash it off in the morning. The action is quite painless, and is so gradual that no one can detect what you are doing; about ten days is the average time. It works by gently absorbing the worn-out scarf skin that gives the face its sallow look, but it does not affect the healthy active tissue beneath. It is used to clear the skin also of freckles and tan, and while some skins respond much more quickly than others to its action, I have never heard of a failure to benefit in the end. It cannot possibly grow hair.

"Blackheads and Enlarged Pores."—The sparkling face-bath treatment is the most pleasant and effective method of overcoming this trouble. Get a few stymol tablets from your chemist, and dissolve one in a cup of hot water. Dab the face with the lotion, and the blackheads will pop out and the large pores close up and efface themselves quite naturally.

"Fading Hair."—Tammalite is the most satisfactory drug to restore grey hair to its original colour. Two ounces of the concentrate mixed with about the same quantity of bay rum is all that you require. Non-greasy, it does not stain the scalp or pillow. Apply with a small sponge.

PARKER BELMONT'S CLYNOL BERRIES FOR OBESITY.—[ADVT.]

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pains that that room was made just as nice as you could make it."

After continuing in this strain a little longer, the Vicar paused and was silent for several moments.

"Yet you are content to commune with your Creator in a building falling into decay," he went on suddenly in ringing tones, "a building with mildew on its walls, insects eating its timber, moisture trickling through the cracks, vermin nesting in rotting foundations."

Roused by the strength of his case, the Vicar talked to his congregation as they had never been talked to in church before. And his remarks were levelled more at the Duchess than at anyone, for she had but to give her favour to the scheme and everyone else would have done so.

On the following day Dick Carrington met Mary Sylvester at the entrance to Little Deeping Wood.

"I am just going to look for some primroses," she said.

"May I help you?" he responded. "I am an expert at tracking down primroses."

They walked slowly along the woodland path, and suddenly Mary turned and gazed up at her companion.

"Mr. Carrington," she said, "I wish you would give up this restoration scheme; it is setting her Grace against you."

"Why should it?"

"Of course, it should not. I know that restoration is necessary. But I know the Duchess, too." Mary's tone grew faintly bitter. "She is a very hard woman, Mr. Carrington, and very fond of her own way. She resents the fact that she was not consulted before anything was said."

"But does the work of the church rest with her?"

"Everything of consequence in Little Deeping and for miles around rests with her. She rides roughshod over the people, and they accept her dictum willingly."

"Had I known that I might have consulted her, merely from a diplomatic point of view. But now I have launched my ship, and I will steer her to harbour somehow or other."

Dick Carrington held himself very erect, his eyes shone, and his mouth was set in dogged lines.

"I am going to call a meeting of parishioners," the Vicar continued, "in order to discuss means of raising a thousand pounds, duchess or no duchess."

"Oh, I do hope you'll succeed," cried Mary enthusiastically. "Will you let me help you?"

"I shall only be too glad. Letters will need writing and answering. Accounts and minutes will have to be kept. There will be plenty for you to do."

Mary's face grew suddenly grave.

"I don't know, though," she said. "I depend for my living on the Duchess. She is quite likely to tell me to go if I upset her. It is not easy for a girl like me to find a situation. I have not been trained to any profession."

"Have you no one to help you?"

She told him that she was an orphan with a tiny income that barely sufficed to buy her clothes. She had well-to-do relatives, but she said she would sooner take any work than apply to them for help.

"Oh, I wish I could take my stand openly with you," she said vehemently.

"And defy the Duchess?" he added smilingly.

"Yes; it would do her good. Really, I believe she has a heart behind her flinty exterior, but years of ridiculous homage from the local people seems to have buried it more and more."

It was only when the evening shadows were beginning to fall that Dick and Mary discovered they had not looked for any primroses!

That evening the Vicar met the wardens and some other leading men of the congregation and told them that he intended calling a public meeting to consider how money could be raised for the restoration. The idea was cold-watered very thoroughly, but Dick faced his opponents doggedly and refused to be turned from his path.

On Sunday morning he saw the organist again. He had not commented on her thwarting his wishes on the previous Sunday morning.

"Miss Davis," he said, "the choir will commence the opening hymn at eleven o'clock promptly, and I must request you to be ready with your part."

She looked at him in a slightly scared manner, and it was evident that she wished to raise an objection, but his determined expression caused the words to remain unspoken.

At eleven o'clock the organ commenced the hymn, and the members of the congregation rose one after the other, looking round in a startled manner.

"Her Grace is not here yet," was whispered on all sides.

A few moments later the Duchess of Downshire and Mary entered the church, but their progress up the aisle was barred by white-robed choristers singing: "We are but little children weak."

Behind the choir walked the Vicar, and he

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passed the Duchess as though she was not there. But he could almost feel her gaze as she leant on her stick and stared at him with her gimletty eyes.

That morning in his sermon the Vicar stated that in the eyes of God all men and women are equal, that He cares as much for a peasant as a princess.

When he gave out the notices he announced that a public meeting would be held on the afternoon of Wednesday week in order to consider ways and means of raising one thousand pounds for restoring the church.

The Duchess had departed when the Vicar came out, but the wardens were waiting for him. They had hastily counted the collection and then hurried out in the hope of being able to say good morning to the Duchess. Their faces wore thunderstruck expressions, and they gazed at the Vicar as though they were looking at some antediluvian animal suddenly come into existence again.

"Vicar!" exclaimed Mr. Glover. "We really must protest against what happened this morning. Our only hope is that you were under the impression that the Duchess had taken her seat."

"I did not know who was present, Mr. Glover."

"Then, if you will excuse me, Vicar, you should have found out," said Mr. Broadbent. "I consider it a deliberate affront to the Duchess. Maybe she will remove her patronage from the church."

"And since when have we wished the church to be patronised?" asked Dick warmly. "If the Duchess were not to worship here again, what should we lose? What has she done to help the church?

"Remember this, gentlemen, divine service commences at eleven o'clock on Sunday mornings."

With this the Vicar strode away, and the wardens gazed after him open-mouthed.

On Wednesday afternoon Dick and Mary duly hunted for primroses again. They certainly found some, but they did not seem to find enough to warrant a whole afternoon's search. Nevertheless, neither of the couple appeared displeased.

During that week Dick was treated to many opinions regarding the forthcoming meeting. Most people seemed dubious of its prospects of success; the fear of the Duchess appeared to be in their hearts.

On Saturday the Vicar met Mary again. Both were bound for a village about three miles away, and when they had carried out their missions they had tea at a cottage where Mary was in the habit of visiting.

Next morning the Duchess was not at church. Mary sat alone in the pew, and she was in her seat before eleven o'clock. Notice of the meeting was given out again, and the Vicar expressed the hope that all present this morning would attend on Wednesday afternoon.

The meeting was to take place in the parish hall at three o'clock, and a little before half-past two Dick set out from the Vicarage. As he reached the gate Mary cycled up.

"Off for a ride?" asked Dick, for he knew it was her afternoon off.

"No, I cycled because I wanted to catch you. I have a message from the Duchess." Mary paused and her cheeks grew pink. Then she went on in faltering tones. "Her Grace says will you go up and see her? She will be ready for you at three o'clock."

The Vicar's face grew grim.

"Her Grace is well aware that I have a meeting in the parish hall at three o'clock," he said. "I cannot be in two places at once. Did she ask you to take back a reply?"

"No; she appeared to think that none was necessary."

"But one is necessary, and I shall send it. Don't you wait, Miss Sylvester."

"May I leave my bicycle here? I—I am going to the meeting."

"Oh, that's fine of you. But how did you think the meeting would be held if I went to see the Duchess?"

"I knew you would not go."

Dick looked into her grey eyes, and her cheeks grew pinker under his steady gaze.

"Will you wait for me?" he asked. "I will send my reply by the housekeeper."

The Vicar's letter was short but to the point. It ran as follows:

YOUR GRACE,

I regret that I cannot fall in with your wishes by calling on you this afternoon, owing to the necessity for my attending the meeting called to consider the question of raising funds for the church's restoration.

I am, Your Grace,

Yours respectfully,

RICHARD CARRINGTON.

Dick and Mary entered the parish hall at ten minutes to three. In the immediate vicinity they noticed numerous parishioners apparently engaged in strolling aimlessly about.

"They are waiting to see if the Duchess is coming," said Mary.

At five minutes to three the two wardens arrived, and each apologised for the absence of his wife. At three o'clock there were just ten people present.

The Vicar, his face expressionless, proposed waiting a little while, but at a quarter-past three the attendance still numbered only ten.

["DEFYING THE DUCHESS" continued overleaf.

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Then Mr. Broadbent stood up.

"Vicar," he said pompously, "in view of the fact that this is not a representative meeting I propose it be postponed."

"I second that!" exclaimed Mr. Glover.

The six stragglers, looking decidedly shame-faced and ill-at-ease, shuffled their feet, and the two wardens picked up their hats.

The Vicar made no movement as his companions began to file out, and presently he was left alone with Mary.

"There appears to be nothing more to wait for," he said, his voice a little unsteady.

Mary stood up and walked to the platform and looked up at the Vicar with slightly misty eyes.

"I am so sorry," she said.

"You mustn't be," he responded, stepping down. "I am not beaten. I shall go on with the fight, even if I am one against all."

"You're not," cried Mary. "Let me help. If the Duchess does not like it I will leave her. Somehow I can manage. I can get a room in a cottage, and I'll work my hardest."

His eyes kindled, and he suddenly thrust his hands in his pockets as though to keep them under control.

"My living is worth four hundred a year," he said. "I have friends who will put up the money for the restoration, and I will pay them back at the rate of a hundred a year. I will not be beaten.

"Mary," he went on swiftly, "you're going to help me. Won't you help me as no one else can? There will still be three hundred a year left, and there's the Vicarage. Mary, will you stand by my side as my wife? I've loved you since I saw you first. It is less than a month ago, I know, but time makes no difference, Mary!"

He held out his hands appealingly, and she put hers in them.

"I'll give you all the help you want," she whispered.

He drew her closer to him and kissed her.

"My dear," he said, "you and I together will win through. You and I together will defy the Duchess."

"A pretty programme!"

The lovers sprang apart, and turned round to see the Duchess leaning on her stick and gazing at them.

"So this is your meeting, Mr. Carrington," she said. "It was for this that you declined to come and see me."

"Your Grace," responded Dick steadily, "to bring about what has happened this afternoon I would have declined the honour of visiting the King himself. But the reason I gave you was a true one."

"And this is your meeting! You and that child plotting to defy me."

"Only because you defied the needs of the church, your Grace."

The Vicar's voice was stern, and he stood up and gave the Duchess look for look.

Mary stood by trembling, but yet proud of his attitude.

Then the Duchess laughed and walked up to them.

"Mr. Carrington," she said, "it is a relief to meet a man at last. I had begun to believe the species was dead at Little Deeping. And you, child," she turned to Mary, "I didn't think you had it in you, but I like you for it. Anyway, your meeting is a failure."

"It isn't," cried Mary. "Dick is going to raise the money and pay it back out of his stipend, and I'm going to help him."

"By giving him two mouths to feed instead of one? A queer way of helping."

"Oh!" exclaimed Mary. "I hadn't thought of that. Oh, Dick!"

"We can manage," he said, putting his arm around her and gazing grimly at the Duchess. "We shall win through."

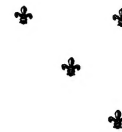
"You pair of babies," snapped the Duchess. "Here, take that, and don't sing 'We are but little children weak' at me again."

She handed the Vicar a cheque for one thousand pounds.

"And if you can put a little of your spirit into your congregation," she went on, "you can come to me again if you want more."

"Stop!" she exclaimed as Dick opened his mouth to speak. "No thanks. When's the wedding to be? Mary had better be married from the castle. I'll have my way about that, for all your defiance. Come up to dinner to-night and we'll talk things over."

Then the Duchess walked out.



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MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

A Word to the Wise.

SHOULD GIRLS KISS SOLDIERS?

THIS weighty question was dealt with in the ROYAL some time ago by Rosemary North, and the answer was in the affirmative. We are glad to know that the Army is with us in this momentous decision, a regimental magazine with approving comments having recently reached me from the Front. The magazine in question is sacred to a certain "Tank" Section, and is a most creditable and light-hearted production. Its editor manages to combine the sword and the pen with very happy results, and as a brother editor I extend to him my sincere homage.

This incident only proves what a keen interest our soldiers take in the ROYAL, so don't forget to pass on your copy, for as one admiring corporal put it in a recent letter, "the good old ROYAL is always ahead with the 'Tommies.'"

PLEASE HELP THE KIDDIES.

As I told you last month, Miss Gladys Cooper, the charming actress, who in private life is Mrs. Herbert Buckmaster is appealing this year in the ROYAL on behalf of the Fresh Air Fund, which exists, as most of you know, to send poor city children to the country in the summer. Fifteen pence pays for a day's holiday for one child and 15s. sends a child to the country for a fortnight.

A day amid green fields, a day among the clover and buttercups spells fairyland for a child and fifteen pence isn't a very big sum even in war-time. Do send me all you can spare. His Majesty King George has already forwarded his annual subscription of £25. The Army and Navy are splendid friends to the kiddies. Won't you do your part, too?

Contributions should be addressed to the Hon. Sec. F.A.F., care of the Editor, THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, W.C. 2.

"PHILLIP AND THE FLAPPERS."

Most of you have read and enjoyed the splendid war stories by Mr W. Douglas Newton, which have appeared from time to time in the ROYAL. Perhaps also you have read "Phillip in Particular," and revelled in the adventures of that delightful young officer who, for all his flippant manner, invariably contrives to come out on top. Whether you have or not, you will welcome a new series entitled "Phillip and the Flappers," which chronicles his meanderings with various pig-tailed damsels, while recovering from a shrapnel wound in Blighty.

Phillip is a pure joy, and his methods in the realms of romance are a revelation in masculine strategy. He makes his *début* in the July ROYAL. You will find it a privilege to meet him.

BOOKS YOU'LL WANT TO BUY.

Having enjoyed "Taffrail's" splendid story on page 91, you are sure, like Oliver Twist, to yearn for more. This is why "Offshore," a new collection of naval sketches by this famous author, comes at an especially opportune time. I commend them to your notice with every confidence. They are written with the breezy, intimate touch of one who knows and loves his subject, and are worthy successors of their popular predecessors, "Stand By!" and "Carry On!" The book costs but a shilling, or can be obtained for 1s. 3d (post free) from the Publisher, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C. 2.

Another book which is bound to make a stir is "The Voyage of the *Deutschland*," by her Commander, Paul König.

This is a thrilling and amusingly written account of the submarine-merchantman's voyage to America and back, her experiences in the North Sea and amid the storms and atmospherical conditions of the Gulf Stream, and her escape from Chesapeake Bay, where the Allied ships were lying in wait for her. The book is splendid value for one shilling (post free 1s. 3d.), or may be had bound in cloth, with a portrait of the Commander, for 2s. (post free 2s. 4d.).

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